

THE STRAITS TIMES

Life
Seungri:
I love
Singapore
D6



Top of the News
Saudi princess to be
envoy to US A9




Home
Shooting from
unusual angles
B4&5

Home Pre-schoolers learn
programming B6



US, China negotiators race to seal trade deal

Both sides report progress on narrowing differences as deadline for tariffs nears

WASHINGTON • United States and Chinese negotiators met for a sixth straight day of talks yesterday in a last-ditch bid to resolve their trade dispute as a deadline loomed.

The world's two biggest economies are racing to seal a deal before a March 1 deadline to avoid an escalation of the tit-for-tat tariffs that have already disrupted global commerce, slowed the world economy and roiled financial markets.

US President Donald Trump has threatened to dramatically hike tariffs on US\$200 billion (S\$271 billion) worth of Chinese imports to 25 per cent from 10 per cent unless there is a deal.

Talks were extended through the weekend after both sides reported progress in narrowing their differences. The two sides had met for over seven hours on Saturday in talks Mr Trump described yesterday as "very productive".

Writing on Twitter before leaving for Hanoi for his summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, which takes place on Wednesday and Thursday, Mr Trump said Chinese President Xi Jinping has been "very helpful" with the summit.

This is the fourth round of negotiations since Washington and Beijing agreed to a ceasefire in their trade war in December.

Mr Trump, who has embraced an "America First" policy aimed at re-balancing global trade in favour of the US, had said on Friday that there was "a very good chance" a deal

would be struck, and that he was inclined to extend his March 1 tariff deadline and meet Mr Xi to finalise any deal.

US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin has said a meeting for late next month at Mr Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida was being planned.

Extending the deadline would mean putting on hold a scheduled increase in tariffs. Mr Mnuchin said US and Chinese officials had reached an agreement on currency issues, but did not give details.

Reuters reported exclusively on Wednesday that both sides were drafting memorandums of understanding (MOUs) on cyber theft, intellectual property rights, services, agriculture and non-tariff barriers to trade, including subsidies.

On Friday, Mr Trump said he did not like MOUs because they are short-term in nature, and he wanted a long-term deal.

An industry source briefed on the talks said both sides have narrowed their differences on intellectual property rights, market access and reducing a nearly US\$400 billion US trade deficit with China. But bigger differences remain on changes to China's treatment of state-owned enterprises, subsidies, forced technology transfers and cyber theft.

There is no agreement on the enforcement mechanism either.

REUTERS

SEE TOP OF THE NEWS A4

Kim on track for peace



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has set off on an armoured train en route to the high-stakes second summit on Wednesday with US President Donald Trump in Vietnam. Mr Kim was seen boarding the green train with yellow horizontal stripes on Saturday afternoon in a photo released by the official North Korean Central News Agency. Mr Kim, who waved as he boarded the train, was accompanied by senior officials and his influential sister Kim Yo Jong. The train was expected to make its way across China, although it was not clear if he would make the entire journey by rail to the summit venue in the Vietnamese capital Hanoi. It will take him some 2½ days to do so – and it is possible he could stop on the way and fly. PHOTO: EPA-EFE SEE WORLD A10&11, EDITORIAL A15

Two Teochew associations in row over shared building

Two of the oldest Teochew associations here are embroiled in a dispute over the Teochew Building at 97 Tank Road, which they have shared since it was built in 1963.

On Dec 7 last year, Ngee Ann Kongsi served an originating summons on the Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan to move out of the premises

for redevelopment, its latest salvo since it first gave notice to the Huay Kuan in June 2017 to move out.

At its annual general meeting yesterday, Huay Kuan president Chua Kee Teang, 70, said the 90-year-old association would counter the legal proceedings, and urged members to stay united in

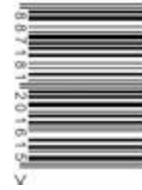
order to safeguard their interests.

According to the Huay Kuan, it owns the land, which is held in trust by Ngee Ann Kongsi.

Ngee Ann Kongsi plans to spend more than \$40 million to redevelop the premises.

SEE TOP OF THE NEWS A6

66 PAGES IN FIVE PARTS
\$1.10
To subscribe: 6388-3838
sphsubscription.com.sg



ASingapore
Press Holdings
publication
MCI(P)069/01/2019★★

50
YEARS
BOLD
1969-2019

COME SEEK



THIS IS OUR
BOLDEST
YEAR SAILING FROM SINGAPORE

Voyager of the Seas® | Spectrum of the Seas™ | Quantum of the Seas®

BOLDEST OFFER EVER

2ND GUEST AT \$3*

Voyager of the Seas®
Asia's Surf & Ice Skate Holiday
3/4-NIGHT
GEMS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA
Singapore Departures
2019 Apr 30 – Jun 21

FROM \$599*

Quantum of the Seas®
The Return of Quantum Adventures
4/5-NIGHT
SPICE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA
Singapore Departures
2019 Nov 16 – 2020 Apr 26

FROM \$899*

Spectrum of the Seas™
Asia's Newest and Largest Ship
3/4-NIGHT
MALAYSIA GETAWAY
Singapore Departures
2019 May 18 & 21

BALCONY SPECIAL
FROM \$1499*

Call 6305 0033 or book online at RoyalCaribbean.com.sg



*All prices are quoted in Singapore dollars, based on the lowest available or guarantee stateroom category of selected departure dates, for per person on twin-sharing basis, subject to associated taxes, port expenses and gratuities ranging from \$127 to \$246. 2ND GUEST AT \$3. Promotion is applicable to Interior, Oceanview and Balcony guarantee stateroom categories on twin-sharing basis only. Promotion is applicable to selected departure dates and valid for new bookings made from Feb 25 to 28 only. All of the above information is correct at time of print, subject to availability and change without prior notice. Other terms apply.

10 must-reads for today

1 Iran tests cruise missile
Iran successfully tested a cruise missile yesterday during naval exercises near the Strait of Hormuz, state media reported. Taking place amid heightened tensions with the United States, the test was part of a three-day military drill that involved more than 100 vessels. **WORLD A14**



Members of the Iranian naval forces taking part in an exercise in the Gulf of Oman last Friday, on the first day of a three-day military drill. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

2 US, China sprint to seal deal
The United States and China were haggling for the sixth straight day yesterday as they raced to resolve their trade spat while the clock ticked down to the March 1 deadline for higher US tariffs on Chinese imports. **TOP OF THE NEWS A1**

3 Hawkers' time to rethink
As the Chinatown Complex food centre in Smith Street closes for a three-month renovation on Friday, hawkers are taking the chance to regroup, with some mulling over whether to reopen their stalls or relocate to other premises. It is not uncommon for hawkers to call it quits during renovations of hawker centres, done every five to seven years. **TOP OF THE NEWS A9**

4 Voters reject airbase move
Residents in Japan's Okinawa yesterday voted against the relocation of a key American airbase yesterday (below), in a result bound to inflame tensions between the prefectural and national governments. More than 70 per cent of voters said "no" to moving the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma airbase, according to exit polls. **WORLD A12**



PHOTO: EPA-EFE

5 Facebook – facing the facts
Facebook has continually dodged responsibility for its business practices. A British parliamentary probe shows why the social media giant needs to be reined in, says Global Affairs correspondent Jonathan Eyal (below). **OPINION A15**



6 Changing delivery scene
A year-end surge in e-commerce is set to become the norm as more people turn to shopping online. This has made last-mile delivery a growing sector, with thousands of collection points across the island. But the market is fragmented, while intense cooperation has drawn calls for more collaboration. **HOME B1**

7 Progress in diabetes fight
The National Healthcare Group (NHG) is gaining ground in its fight against diabetes, with the rise in numbers of new patients and those who suffer complications slowing. NHG attributed this to patients being cared for by the same team of doctors, nurses and care coordinators at polyclinics. **HOME B2**

8 Upbeat about Singapore
These are uncertain times for global trade but if Singapore stays the course and continues to make itself an attractive business centre, it will prevail in the long run, said Mr Charles Goodyear, former chief executive of mining giant BHP Billiton, in an interview with The Straits Times last Wednesday. **BUSINESS C1**

9 Club employee charged
A female administrative assistant from Singapore Premier League football club Hougang United has been charged with misappropriating \$278,200 from its clubhouse operations. Malaysian Tean Tai Tee, who allegedly committed the offence between Nov 29 and Dec 11, is out on bail of \$100,000 and is due back in court on March 12. **SPORT C9**

10 Child has a fever? Stay cool
Parents and caregivers may get into a slight panic when their child runs a fever but doctors say most cases of fever without other symptoms are harmless and do not require a trip to the emergency room. **LIFE D1&2**

Straits Times Digital

REACH US AT

Website:
www.straitstimes.com

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/thestraitstimes

Twitter: @STcom

Instagram: @Straits_Times

Also follow us on Telegram



VIDEO

Scoot working to fix flight delays

Speaking for the first time on recent flight delays, Scoot CEO Lee Lik Hsin tells ST that operational and service lapses are being reviewed and measures will be put in place to address them. <http://str.sg/leelikhsin>



VIDEO

Resilience led to success

Tired of the long hours working behind a bar, Mr Sam Weng Cham furthered his studies to pursue another career. Now, he is a successful technopreneur whose company makes millions. <http://str.sg/samwengcham>

www.jcu.edu.sg

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY SINGAPORE

ADMISSIONS DAY

2 March 2019 (Saturday) | 11am – 4pm

Need information for your education?
WE HAVE IT HERE.

Register Now!
jcu.sg/adday03

James Cook University Australia
James Cook University Australia offers pathway, undergraduate and postgraduate programs at the Singapore campus of James Cook University.
James Cook University | 149 Sims Drive, S(387380) | CPF Registration No. 200100786X | Period of Registration: 13 July 2018 to 12 July 2022

1 university • 2 countries • 3 tropical locations
Creating a brighter future for life in the tropics world-wide through graduates and discoveries that make a difference.

edutrust SINGAPORE QUALITY CLASS STAR
Cert No. EDU-11801
Valid to: 10/04/2015 - 09/04/2019

Beauty Asia 2019
The 23rd International Cosmetics, Skincare, Fragrance and Hair Products, Equipment & Packaging Technology Exhibition

23RD EDITION

BEAUTYASIA2019
The Most Comprehensive Beauty & Wellness Trade Exhibition

TRADE AND PROFESSIONALS ONLY
25 – 27 FEB 2019 • 11AM – 7PM
SUNTEC SINGAPORE LEVEL 4 HALLS 401 – 403

STAGE PROGRAMME

TIME	25 FEB 2019 (Monday)	26 FEB 2019 (Tuesday)	27 FEB 2019 (Wednesday)
11.00pm to 12.00pm		NR Nobel™: An Innovative Breakthrough in the Field of Life Extension and Longevity in Cosmetics by AVIV International Pte Ltd	Nano Hair Restoration by H-Plus (S) Pte Ltd
12.00pm to 1.00pm	Increase Profitability and Productivity with Microneedling, Plasma and Clinical Module Core for Professionals by Meijo Skincare Wellness	Increase Profitability and Productivity with Microneedling, Plasma and Clinical Module Core for Professionals by Meijo Skincare Wellness	Increase Profitability and Productivity with Microneedling, Plasma and Clinical Module Core for Professionals by Meijo Skincare Wellness
1.00pm to 2.00pm	3D Aesthetics Solutions via AI Technology by HRS Technology Pte Ltd	3D Aesthetics Solutions via AI Technology by HRS Technology Pte Ltd	DR. HOU & LING Double Extracts Diamond White Essence by Jing Rui Biotechnology - Cai En International Ltd
2.00pm to 3.00pm	The Most Advanced Reproduction Beauty in Japan by Beauty Planning Inc.	TOKI SKIN: The Japanese Way to Naturally Beautiful, Porcelain Skin by Lit Botanica Pte Ltd	3D Aesthetics Solutions via AI Technology by HRS Technology Pte Ltd
3.00pm to 4.00pm	Miraculous Non Surgical Face Lift by FABLife Pte Ltd	DR. HOU & LING LIPOFORM Bust Plus Lotion by Jing Rui Biotechnology - Cai En International Ltd	Your Skills Your Future: Latest Government Subsidy Beauty Courses 2019 by SOQ Biz Hub Pte Ltd
4.00pm to 5.00pm	NR Nobel™: An Innovative Breakthrough in the Field of Life Extension and Longevity in Cosmetics by AVIV International Pte Ltd	The Myth of Japanese Cosmetics, 'NAHLS' by Deep Impact Co., Ltd.	NR Nobel™: An Innovative Breakthrough in the Field of Life Extension and Longevity in Cosmetics by AVIV International Pte Ltd
5.00pm to 6.00pm	Nano Hair Restoration by H-Plus (S) Pte Ltd	Miraculous Non Surgical Face Lift by FABLife Pte Ltd	Self-Defence Power - Our Body's Inherent Ability to Heal by Nature Produce
6.00pm to 7.00pm	Self-Defence Power - Our Body's Inherent Ability to Heal by Nature Produce	Nano Hair Restoration by H-Plus (S) Pte Ltd	

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

TIME	25 FEB 2019 (Monday)	26 FEB 2019 (Tuesday)	27 FEB 2019 (Wednesday)
11.30pm to 12.30pm	3D Aesthetics Solutions via AI Technology by HRS Technology Pte Ltd		
12.30pm to 1.30pm	7 Minutes Miracle Face Lift by FABLife Pte Ltd	7 Minutes Miracle Face Lift by FABLife Pte Ltd	
1.30pm to 2.30pm	Nano Hair Restoration by H-Plus (S) Pte Ltd	Nano Hair Restoration by H-Plus (S) Pte Ltd	Nano Hair Restoration by H-Plus (S) Pte Ltd
2.30pm to 3.30pm	The Best Body Contouring Tech of Both Worlds: NobleShape with LD+AMF+RF by Aesthetics Marketing Asia Pte Ltd	Add a Whole New Dimension to your AGASSI - The Latest RF Smile Lifting & Vaginal Tightening Concept! by Aesthetics Marketing Asia Pte Ltd	Bio-Jel - The Next Generation of Needle-Free Transdermal Drug Delivery Concept! by Aesthetics Marketing Asia Pte Ltd
3.30pm to 4.30pm	2 Weeks to Brighter, Even and Younger Looking Skin with the Power of Po3™ - The Light Serum by 28Cubed by NamZ Pte Ltd	3D Aesthetics Solutions via AI Technology by HRS Technology Pte Ltd	3D Aesthetics Solutions via AI Technology by HRS Technology Pte Ltd
4.30pm to 5.30pm		5 Most Effective Meridian Point for Natural Face Lifting by SOQ Biz Hub Pte Ltd	5 Most Effective Meridian Point for Natural Face Lifting by SOQ Biz Hub Pte Ltd

Visitors are encouraged to pre-register at our website www.beautyasia.com.sg

Important Note: - The Exhibition is strictly open only to trade, professionals and business visitors from the beauty and wellness industry by invitation and business card registration only. - For safety reasons, children below the age of 16 will not be allowed to enter the exhibition hall at any time. - All visitors must be suitably attired as this is a professional trade exhibition. - The organizer reserves the right to refuse admission to any person or remove any person from the exhibition hall without giving any reason.

Incorporating: **Spa Asia 2019** The International Spa and Wellness Products & Services Exhibition

Owned & Produced by: **Lines Exhibition Pte Ltd**
In affiliation with Lines Exposition & Management Services Pte Ltd
• Tel: (65) 6299 8611 • Fax: (65) 6299 8633
• Email: enquiry@lines.com.sg • Website: www.beautyasia.com.sg

Media Partners: • Estetica World • Export Magazine • Kasmetik International • Nailotic • Nippon Beauty

fb.com/BeautyAsiaSingapore



ROLEX AND CINEMA

The world of Rolex is filled with stories of perpetual excellence. James Cameron, Martin Scorsese, Kathryn Bigelow and Alejandro G. Iñárritu have each made a legendary impact on the world of cinema. With their unique vision, style and passion for their craft, they continually inspire the next generation of filmmakers. For years to come, the work of these Oscar®-winning directors will influence the art of the motion picture. This is a story of perpetual excellence, the story of Rolex.

#Perpetual



OYSTER PERPETUAL DATEJUST 41



EXCLUSIVE WATCH OF THE
ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE
ARTS AND SCIENCES


ROLEX

US court grants MOH temporary restraining order against Brochez

Tan Tam Mei

The Ministry of Health (MOH) has been granted a temporary restraining order by a US court against the American who stole and leaked information from Singapore's HIV database, The Straits Times has learnt.

The order, given last Tuesday, temporarily prohibits Mikhy Brochez from disclosing any information from the ministry.

It came ahead of last Friday's arrest of the 34-year-old, who has

been charged in a Kentucky court in the United States with the possession and unlawful transfer of stolen identification documents.

US court documents obtained by The Straits Times shed more light on the civil suit that the MOH had filed.

The documents detailed that the ministry had requested for an emergency ex parte temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction against Brochez on Feb 14.

In making its case to the court, the ministry had among its reasons said that while it was working to disable access to the confidential infor-

mation disclosed online, the data is still in Brochez's possession and he could still publicly disclose it.

The restraining order did not require notice to be given to Brochez.

The MOH had also earlier said it had sought the injunction to order Brochez to return the information. Court papers also said the ministry requested that Brochez hand over the names and contact information of all the people and entities he had disclosed the information to.

Documents for a separate case investigated by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in which



Mikhy Brochez is temporarily prohibited by the order from disclosing any information from the Ministry of Health.

Brochez was charged last Friday also revealed that he had housed the stolen HIV information on the Google Drive cloud platform.

He then sent Google Drive links to individuals as well as people in the US and Singapore governments and media outlets.

In an affidavit filed on Friday, FBI special agent Chelsea Holliday, who handled the case, said Brochez contacted the bureau in November last year, with various allegations.

Among them, he claimed that his partner Ler Teck Siang had "mar-

ried him under false pretences" and conspired with the Singapore Government to falsely imprison him, but did not provide proof.

Ler was head of the MOH's National Public Health Unit from March 2012 to May 2013 and had access to the HIV Registry for his work.

Ler has been charged under the Official Secrets Act for failing to take reasonable care of confidential information regarding HIV-positive patients.

Brochez and the agent spoke several times after, but she told him the FBI could not begin an investigation into a foreign government based "solely on his word".

Last month, Brochez contacted her again, saying he had important information and believed the Singapore Government was going to try to kidnap him again.

"Brochez refused to explain what he wanted from the FBI, appeared

to be emotionally distressed and was erratic," she said.

She learnt this month from reports that Brochez had possession of a database containing information of 14,200 people who tested positive for HIV.

In a phone call with Brochez last Tuesday, he had told her he would commit suicide rather than turn over the database. He also threatened to release the database to the public if Ler was not released.

The agent added that Brochez's mother, Ms Teresa King, had said during a phone interview that her son was mentally ill and she was "extremely afraid" of him.

Last Thursday, Brochez was arrested in Jackson, Kentucky, and transferred to FBI custody. He was charged in court the next day, and is next due in court on Wednesday.

tammei@sph.com.sg

Older buyers of 2-room flexi flats pick short lease

91% of older buyers go for that, with 40-year lease the most popular

Lester Wong

About nine in 10 older buyers of HDB's two-room flexi flats have chosen shorter leases, an option that frees up more cash for them.

The lease lengths range from 15 to 45 years. Only those aged 55 and above qualify to take up this option.

Started in November 2015, the scheme offers new two-room flexi flats to families and singles. The default lease length is 99 years.

But the flats are more popular with older buyers. Of the 16,169 two-room flexi units booked to date, more than half of the buyers – 54 per cent – are aged 55 and above, said the Housing Board, giving an

update last Friday. Of these, the vast majority – 91 per cent – went for the shorter leases. They can also opt for senior-friendly features like grab bars in the flats, which are typically 36 sq m or 45 sq m in size.

Among these buyers were a semi-retired couple who opted for a new two-room flat with a 45-year lease after learning of the scheme.

Mr Tan Hiok San, 68, and his wife, Madam Chen Yuxian, 58, downsized from their three-room flat in Chai Chee as it made more sense financially. They had initially wanted to buy a larger flat with a 99-year lease using money they got from selling their coffee shop business.

They paid \$120,000 for their 45-year-lease two-room flat. A comparable flat with a 99-year lease costs around \$230,000 to \$250,000.

Their new flat is in the same neighbourhood, and they moved in

last April after selling their resale corner flat for \$370,000.

"We don't really have much use for a 99-year lease as we have no children to pass the flat on to. Moving to a smaller flat was not a problem for us and we are still in Chai Chee, which we are very familiar with," said Madam Chen.

Among the shorter lease periods, the 40-year one was the most popular with 2,545 buyers.

This was followed by the 35-year lease with 2,154 buyers and the 30-year lease with 1,344 buyers.

The HDB said 139 buyers opted for the shortest lease of 15 years.

Mr Tan said they would have preferred a 30-year lease, as flats with shorter leases cost less than those with longer leases. But that option was not open to them, as Madam Chen would need to be at least 65 to qualify. HDB requires two-room flexi leases to cover the applicants



Mr Tan Hiok San, 68, and his wife Chen Yuxian, 58, downsized from their three-room flat in Chai Chee to a two-room flat with a 45-year lease. They paid \$120,000 for it. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

and their spouses up to the age of at least 95.

Mr Tan said their switch has prompted some old friends and former patrons to follow suit.

"They got a little envious of how comfortable we are and decided they would do the same as well," said Mr Tan, who works part-time at a cafe in Bedok Mall.

The HDB said more two-room flexi flats will be offered in Kallang/Whampoa, Tengah and Woodlands at the next Build-To-Order sales exercise in May.

It launched 937 such flats in Jurong West and Sengkang at the sales exercise earlier this month.

lesterw@sph.com.sg



NOT A FAN OF MOU

I don't like MOUs because they don't mean anything. To me they don't mean anything. I think you're better off just going into a document. I was never... a fan of an MOU.



US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

GOAL IS FINAL CONTRACT

I think that a memorandum of understanding is not a contract to the extent that we want... We're doing a memorandum of understanding that will be put into a final contract, I assume. But to me the final contract is really the thing, Bob, and I think you mean that too.



MR TRUMP, addressing US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer.

US President Donald Trump at a meeting with China's Vice-Premier Liu He and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer in Washington last Friday. PHOTO: REUTERS

US trade negotiator dumps the term MOU after Trump objects

WASHINGTON • In trade talks between the United States and China, memorandums of understanding (MOUs) – the building blocks of what would be a historic deal – are officially out.

US President Donald Trump, in an extraordinary wrangle with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer last Friday, dismissed the MOUs that have formed the outline of a potential trade pact as a waste of time, despite protests from his chief negotiator.

Sitting in the Oval Office across from Mr Lighthizer and his Chinese counterpart in the trade talks, Vice-Premier Liu He, Mr Trump unloaded about his feelings on MOUs, which have reportedly been drawn up in six critical areas to form the outline of a broad deal.

"I don't like MOUs because they don't mean anything. To me they don't mean anything. I think you're better off just going into a document. I was never... a fan of an MOU," Mr Trump said.

Mr Lighthizer, who was sitting with other members of Mr Trump's negotiating team, including Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, economic adviser Larry Kudlow and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, explained that writing MOUs was a standard procedure in forming trade agreements.

"An MOU is a contract. It's the way trade agreements are generally used... A memorandum of understanding is a binding agreement between two people," Mr Lighthizer

said. "It's a legal term, it's a contract," he said.

But Mr Trump was not satisfied. "By the way, I disagree," he countered, addressing reporters as well as the Chinese delegation that has been negotiating the MOUs with the US team.

"I think that a memorandum of understanding is not a contract to the extent that we want... We're doing a memorandum of understanding that will be put into a final contract, I assume. But to me the final contract

is really the thing, Bob, and I think you mean that too," he said, addressing Mr Lighthizer.

Negotiators are reportedly drawing up six MOUs on structural issues: forced technology transfer and cyber theft, intellectual property rights, services, currency, agriculture, and non-tariff barriers to trade.

Mr Lighthizer, clearly not making traction in the back-and-forth with his boss, decided to go for a change in terminology. "From now on we're not using the word memorandum of

understanding any more. We're going to use the term trade agreement, all right?" he said.

"OK," the Chinese Vice-Premier, sitting next to Mr Lighthizer, responded.

"Assuming you decide on an agreement... it'll be a trade agreement between the United States and China," Mr Lighthizer told the President.

"Good," Mr Trump said. "I like that much better." REUTERS

SEE BUSINESS C3

**WE ARE
THE PEOPLE THAT
DO**



Listening. Understanding. Delivering.



From left: Honorary secretary for Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan Woo Chee Chay, president Chua Kee Teang, lifetime honorary president and adviser George Quek and vice-president Chan Kian Kuan showing an old picture of members in front of the Teochew Building, at a press conference yesterday. The Huay Kuan said it intends to counter a legal case by Ngee Ann Kongsí, after the latter attempted to remove the former from the premises so that redevelopment can be carried out. ST PHOTOS: MARK CHEONG

Teochew associations lock horns over building in Tank Road

Feud began when one asked the other to move out so premises can be redeveloped

Tan Tam Mei

A feud is brewing in the Teochew community.

Two major associations, the Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan and Ngee Ann Kongsí, are at loggerheads over the Teochew Building, with the latter attempting to remove the former from the premises so that redevelopment

can be carried out.

In a press conference yesterday, the Huay Kuan said it intends to counter a legal case by Ngee Ann Kongsí for it to leave the building in Tank Road, off River Valley Road, which has housed both associations since it was built in 1963.

It says it owns the land, which is being held in trust by Ngee Ann Kongsí.

Huay Kuan president Chua Kee

Teang, 70, said Ngee Ann Kongsí served an originating summons in December last year related to the association leaving the building.

"We've had a brotherly relationship serving the Teochew community here in Singapore, so this has saddened us," he said.

The Teochew community is the largest Chinese dialect group here after the Hokkiens. The Huay Kuan was founded in 1929 and focuses on promoting Teochew culture through activities such as community service.

Ngee Ann Kongsí was formed in 1845 as a philanthropic foundation.

It established Ngee Ann College in 1963, which later became Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

While the clans have crossed swords in the past, they have co-existed at the Teochew Building for the past 55 years.

In 2017, Ngee Ann Kongsí gave written notice to the Huay Kuan that it had a year to move out ahead of redevelopment of the premises.

Leaders from both organisations met multiple times to negotiate, but talks have now broken down.

When contacted, Ngee Ann Kongsí confirmed it filed the summons but declined to comment

while the matter is before the courts. "(We) remain committed to want to resolve this matter amicably with (the Huay Kuan)," it said.

According to Chinese daily Lianhe Zaobao, the Huay Kuan said the decision for redevelopment was a unilateral move by Ngee Ann Kongsí, and it was not consulted, despite being the beneficiary of the land. The Huay Kuan said it owns the land on which the building sits, and the land is held under trust with Ngee Ann Kongsí.

Ngee Ann Kongsí reportedly also wants the Huay Kuan to start paying a "token rental", which the latter did

not agree to, when it moves back in. Ngee Ann Kongsí plans to spend over \$40 million to redevelop the premises to use for education, cultural exhibitions and community activities.

The redevelopment, which will maintain the facade of the building, is expected to take about two to three years. But the plans have been delayed because of the feud.

During the Huay Kuan's 85th annual general meeting yesterday, Mr Chua called for members to stay united to safeguard the rights and interests of the association. In attendance were prominent members of the Teochew community like BreadTalk chairman George Quek, who is an adviser and lifetime honorary president of the Huay Kuan.

Said Mr Chua: "We cannot let our work of the past 90 years be destroyed, we cannot let our Teochew forefathers down."

Legal proceedings are expected to cost at least \$2 million, and a "rescue fund" has been set up to raise legal fees. By the end of the meeting, over \$1.1 million had been raised, with some board members chipping in \$200,000 each.

Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Culture, Community and Youth Baey Yam Keng, who is Teochew, said that it was a pity to hear of the feud, as both associations had a long history together.

"Ultimately it's the same community of people, so it's a real pity to be on such bad terms."

"I really hope they can find some way to resolve this amicably."

tammei@sph.com.sg



The Teochew Building in Tank Road, off River Valley Road, has housed both the Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan and Ngee Ann Kongsí since it was built in 1963.

Saving water less of a concern for younger residents: Study

Tee Zhuo

A culture of saving water has become watered down here, going by a government study.

A focus group study by national water agency PUB and government feedback unit Reach revealed that younger Singaporeans and permanent residents (PRs) appear to be less concerned about the sustainability of the country's water supply than older residents aged 55 and above.

The findings were released ahead of a new campaign to get Singaporeans to save water.

The qualitative study held focus group sessions with about 50 Singaporeans and PRs who are also responsible for paying their own household utility bills last October.

Younger participants – those with young or teenage children – perceived water scarcity as "a distant concept" due to the ready availability of water here, the PUB said.

The PUB's new campaign will be launched at Marina Barrage on March 2, Singapore World Water Day, together with over 2,000 representatives from schools, firms

and grassroots organisations.

More than 64 roadshows and events islandwide will be held in the same month. Water rationing exercises will also be conducted in schools to inculcate water-saving habits among the young.

The campaign is themed "Make Every Drop Count" and emphasises the complexity of making water in Singapore.

The focus group study by PUB and Reach also found that even among those who were lacking the means to manage water consumption effectively.

Efforts to diversify the Republic's water sources, such as Newater and desalination, have also assured them that Singapore's water supply is secure, the PUB added.

Ms Jessica Cheam, managing editor of Eco-Business, a media organisation dedicated to sustainable development, agreed that a "sense of complacency" may have arisen from Singapore's ability to address its existential water crisis effectively in the past decades.

"I think this is why it is important to constantly have dialogues among citizens, and between citi-

The PUB's new campaign will be launched at Marina Barrage on March 2, Singapore World Water Day, together with over 2,000 representatives from schools, firms and grassroots organisations. More than 64 roadshows and events islandwide will be held in the same month. Water rationing exercises will also be conducted in schools to inculcate water-saving habits among the young.

zens and the Government, on why water continues to be a scarce resource that we need to take seriously, along with others such as energy and food," she added.

Mr Desmond Choo, a member of the Government Parliamentary Committee for Environment and Water Resources, said Singapore's future growth depends on meeting growing water demands, and climate change has made it even more urgent. "Earlier generations have experienced water shortages... (but) we now have water flowing any time from our taps. While we hope that our younger Singaporeans would never go through water crises, we must all share in this national duty to guard our water resources zealously."

For Ms Regina Lee, a master's student at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, the new campaign is important to inculcate a water-saving culture. "But I'm not sure if wasting water is an age thing," said the 23-year-old, adding that she has seen older Singaporeans waste water as well.

The campaign is in line with plans to cut water use here.

Last October, Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean announced a new target of 130 litres per person daily by 2030, shaving 10 litres off the original goal. In 2017, each person here used 143 litres daily, just shy of the 140 litre target initially set for 2030 under the Sustainable Singapore Blueprint.

teezhuo@sph.com.sg

SPH's first chief executive Lyn Holloway dies at 90

Tiffany Fumiko Tay

A respected figure of the newspaper industry and former chief executive of Singapore Press Holdings (SPH), Mr Lyn Holloway, died on Saturday at the age of 90. The cause of death was not immediately known.

Mr Holloway, a librarian by training, helped shape journalism in Singapore as the managing director of Times Publishing and The Straits Times Press, which he joined in 1961.

Among the many changes he oversaw was the formation of SPH in 1984 through the merger of three organisations: Singapore News and Publications Limited, Times Publishing Berhad and The Straits Times Press group.

The merger brought together the flagship newspapers of different languages under one roof.

Mr Holloway was appointed SPH's first CEO, but resigned a year later, citing health reasons. He later became CEO of Hong Kong's South China Morning Post.

Former Straits Times editor-in-chief Peter Lim, who was a colleague and long-time friend, said he was "a true publisher in the best traditions of Western-style English language newspaper and magazine publishing".



Mr Lyn Holloway oversaw the formation of SPH in 1984 through the merger of three organisations.

He straddled both the business and editorial components with ease, understood the demands of the business and that "in publishing, the editorial content is the key product", said Mr Lim, 80.

While the early days saw journalists using "rickety typewriters and old furniture", Mr Holloway believed that investments in editorial were crucial to ensure quality.

He raised salaries, hired more staff and oversaw the setting up of foreign bureaus. He was also a skilled negotiator, said Mr Lim.

"Lyn left ST group's editorial and other departments much more professional than he first found them; and their people generally feeling they would miss an unusually good, friendly boss," said Mr Lim.

Mr Holloway leaves his wife, Anne Wong-Holloway, sister Hazel Mariot and sister-in-law Suzanne Holloway.

tiffanyt@sph.com.sg

We do health.

Because you'll be stronger for your loved ones.

Be prepared for what tomorrow may bring. We're doing more to help you live a healthy and secure life. See more of what we're doing at prudential.com.sg



Listening. Understanding. Delivering.



Singaporeans turn to online petitions to champion causes

More tech-savvy citizens lobbying for change on online platforms

Joyce Lim
Senior Correspondent

A year ago, a dog circus wanted to come to town. The troop of poodles, promised the organisers, would perform “breathtaking gongfu diabolo” and “fun acrobatics”.

Some 7,000 people leapt into action – by signing an online petition agitating for the show at Resorts World Sentosa to be scrapped.

Within a day of the tickets going on sale, the show was canned, and the person who started the petition, Ms Summer Ong, declared “victory”.

More Singaporeans like Ms Ong are waging such signature-collection campaigns online.

A check by The Straits Times showed that Singaporeans created more than 140 petitions on popular petition websites like Change.org and GoPetition last year.

This is almost double the 80 online petitions started here in 2017. In 2010, there was just one.

And if the petitions are a reflection of tech-savvy Singaporeans’ concerns, they are a diverse bag of issues, from social to environmental to political. Many are aimed at getting the Government to relook policies.

They range from calls to allow cats to be approved as pets in HDB

flats and making Changi Airport straw-free to introducing minimum wage in Singapore and national service deferment for Singaporean footballer Ben Davis.

Others wanted an open presidential election for all races in 2017, legalisation of same-sex marriages, and equal CareShield life premiums for women and men.

The latest success story is a petition last month to get the Ministry of Health (MOH) to clarify its stand on informed consent for minor medical procedures. This comes after an orthopaedic surgeon was fined \$100,000 by the Singapore Medical Council for not telling his patient of possible complications from a commonly used steroid injection.

Dr Tho Kam San said in the petition addressed to Health Minister Gan Kim Yong that it had never been a professional practice to routinely inform patients of minor side effects of medication.

It drew over 6,400 signatures, and the issue was raised in Parliament. Last week, MOH asked for a review of the doctor’s fine.

On Jan 30, Dr Tho had claimed victory, saying the Health Minister had responded, and thanked those who signed “without whom we would probably not have got such a detailed clarification on the matter”.

Online petitions are easy and

>140

Number of petitions started by Singaporeans on popular websites such as Change.org and GoPetition last year.

80

Number of online petitions started in Singapore in 2017.

1

Number of petitions started here in 2010.

quick to create. They can be shared with thousands of people through tweets and Facebook posts. Change.org, for instance, boasts of over 270 million users in 196 countries and claims to achieve one victory every hour.

But not all petitions are the same. For every one that managed to influence a policy change, there are many others that die a quiet death in cyberspace.

Asked if petitions work in influencing the Singapore Government, former Nominated MP Eugene Tan says it does not make decisions in such a populist way. But petitions are a good way to rally people around a particular cause.

“It’s also a form of self-help by putting into the public domain one’s stand on a matter of public interest. Further, it conveys the narrative that I am not the only one feeling this way,” said Mr Tan, a law academic at Singapore Management University.

The most popular petition in Singapore so far is one asking people to not use plastic straws in restaurants here. Started eight months ago, it has got over 86,000 signatures.

Another petition accusing some family lawyers of being unethical has also gained traction with over 11,000 signatures. It was started by a group of unnamed parents.

Law Society of Singapore president Gregory Vijayendran, one of those to whom the petition is addressed, said that the society has yet to receive a proper complaint on the allegations.

He gives such online petitions short shrift. “A petition signed by anonymous persons on the Internet – irrespective of the numbers involved – will not cut any ice with us,” said Mr Vijayendran. “Might is not always right. Moreover, the cloak of anonymity afforded by online platforms allows for some members of the cyber community to be keyboard warriors with no sense of responsibility for the statements they make. In our view, an online petition is a sub-optimal process of ventilating specific queries of professional misconduct by lawyers.”

He added that any “properly made complaint” about a lawyer will be thoroughly investigated by independent disciplinary tribunals.

While some may think that the effectiveness of petitions depends on the number of signatures collected, Mr Tan said that what is also important are details such as who initiated the petition.

The value of petitions, say those interviewed, is not so much in seeking change. Rather, they offer insight into ground sentiment.

MPs agree, saying that they do track petitions.

Some may have some merits that politicians can look deeper into, said Tanjong Pagar GRC MP Joan Pereira, adding that views of the wider community and national interests will also have to be considered. The rise of such petitions is a sign that Singaporeans are more aware and more proactive in supporting issues close to their hearts, she added.

For Nee Soon GRC MP Louis Ng, the content of the petition is more important than the numbers.

In 2017, Mr Ng submitted a parliamentary petition to the House calling for a review of the public housing policy for single parents. “I got only seven single parents to sign the petition. It was useful and got some attention on an issue,” he said.

Mr Ng, who also sits on the Public Petition Committee in Parliament, said the House has not received any online petitions.

Public petitions submitted to the House follow much stricter rules. For instance, petitioners will need to submit their names and other details like NRIC numbers, said Mr Ng, who is supportive of online petitions, but urged people to do more than just be keyboard warriors.

National para-swimmer Theresa Goh, who has participated in several petitions such as fighting for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights globally, said: “If petitions didn’t exist, then we would feel there’s a void. Every type of support in my opinion has its place.”

joycel@sph.com.sg

Online petitions run risk of being rigged

Online petitions can be easily rigged.

In 2016, an online petition in Britain for a second Brexit referendum was reportedly hacked. Some 77,000 fake signatures were later removed.

Hackers claimed to have used computer bots and left scripts running to create the counterfeit names.

The Straits Times carried out an experiment to find out how easily this can be done. An online petition calling for a ban on bubble tea sale outside primary schools was created on a popular petition website.

After three days, the petition, which was not publicised on social media platforms, received only two signatures.

Kantu, a free automation software, was then used. Several commands were created to tell the program to generate fake signatures and automatically fill in names.

Kantu was left to run on its own and it generated about 1,000 signatures a day. In three days, over 3,000 signatures were produced. The fake petition to ban bubble tea sale was even labelled as one of the popular petitions on the website.

Said tech entrepreneur Alvin Poh, 34, who runs the blog www.alvinpoh.com: “Most manual processes can be automated by programs known as bots. In some cases, hackers use made-up e-mail addresses or throwaway e-mail addresses to sign up for petitions.”

One tell-tale sign that a petition result might be rigged would be the large and sharp jump in number of signatures over a short period of time, said Mr Poh.

Joyce Lim



Speaking at the end of a mass in the frescoed Sala Regia of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace yesterday, Pope Francis vowed that the Roman Catholic Church will “spare no effort” to bring abusers to justice and will not cover up or underestimate abuse.
PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE - PRESSE

Pope calls for ‘all-out battle’ against sexual abuse of kids by clergy

VATICAN CITY • Pope Francis, ending a landmark conference on sexual abuse of children by clergy, called yesterday for an “all-out battle” against a crime he said should be “erased from the face of the earth”.

The Pope promised that guidelines used by national bishops’ conferences to prevent abuse and punish perpetrators will be reviewed and strengthened. He also said the Church’s legal definition of minors will be raised from the current age of 14 in order to “expand protection” of young people.

Pope Francis vowed that the Roman Catholic Church will “spare no effort” to bring abusers to justice and will not cover up or underesti-

mate abuse, as he spoke at the end of a mass in the frescoed Sala Regia of the Vatican’s Apostolic Palace.

However, he dedicated much of the first part of a speech lasting more than half an hour to statistics from the United Nations and other organisations showing that most sexual abuse of children takes place in families.

“We are thus facing a universal problem, tragically present almost everywhere and affecting everyone. Yet we need to be clear that while gravely affecting our societies as a whole, this evil is in no way less monstrous when it takes place within the Church,” he said.

Ms Anne Barrett-Doyle of the US-based clergy abuse tracking group

bishopaccountability.org, called it a “stunning letdown” that did not sufficiently address the grief and outrage of the faithful.

“Especially distressing was the Pope’s familiar rationalisation that abuse happens in all sectors of society... We needed him to offer a bold and decisive plan. He gave us instead defensive, recycled rhetoric,” she said in a statement.

Speaking later in his traditional public Sunday address in St Peter’s Square, Pope Francis said past cover-ups by some in the Church and the protection of abusers was “unjustifiable”.

The Vatican says it will formulate follow-up measures to make sure all bishops from around the world

return home knowing how to put anti-abuse procedures into place.

The conference brought together bishops from countries such as the United States, where cases of abuse have fallen dramatically because of measures enacted nearly 20 years ago, and bishops from far-flung countries, mostly poor countries, who still have not come to terms with the problem.

At the start of the conference last Thursday, the Pope and the participants had watched a video of five victims telling their stories of abuse and cover-up.

The homily of the mass that formally ended the gathering of some 200 top Church leaders was delivered by Archbishop Mark Coleridge

of Brisbane, Australia, whose words were in many ways more pungent than the Pope’s. “We will not go unpunished,” the archbishop said. “In abuse and its concealment, the powerful (of the Church) show themselves not men of heaven but men of earth,” he said.

During the conference, a list of 21 “reflection points” was handed out. The first was that each diocese should have a “practical handbook” on steps to be taken when cases emerge.

They included actions such as informing the civil authorities of substantial accusations in compliance with local law and making sure non-clerics are involved in Church investigations of abuse. The meeting took

place after events in 2018 made it the most problematic year for the Pope since his election in 2013.

In Ireland, where the Pope visited last August, the sexual abuse scandal shattered the power of the Church which four decades ago dominated society.

In Chile, which he visited in January last year, all of the country’s bishops offered their resignations over a widespread cover-up. Pope Francis accepted seven of the resignations and dismissed two others from the priesthood.

Last year, a report by a grand jury in Pennsylvania revealed that priests had sexually abused about 1,000 people over seven decades in that US state alone. REUTERS



TIME FOR A RETHINK

Tourists and young people who are more willing to try our flavours don't know about this hawker centre because it's not visible from the street. Though the renovation is necessary, I don't think it will improve footfall to our stall.



STALLHOLDER FRANCESCA UNG

Ms Francesca Ung and her business partner Darrel Krishnan have been running Penang Chik Ho Liao at Chinatown Complex, which closes on Friday for renovation. They have yet to decide on their future plans.
ST PHOTO: SAHIBA CHAUDHARY

When it's renovation time, some hawkers move or quit

They often use the months-long downtime to mull over their future in the business

Yuen Sin

Six days a week, from 6am to 9pm, hawker Lick Su, 74, is on his feet preparing and serving bowls of Teochew fish soup and porridge at Chin Chau Lou stall in Chinatown Complex food centre in Smith Street.

But when the food centre, Singapore's largest, closes on Friday for a three-month renovation, he will hang up his apron for good.

"I'm too old to spend such long hours at this stall. I'm 99 per cent sure I won't come back when the centre reopens," said Mr Lick, whose culinary experience goes back to the 70s.

The renovation of hawker centres is done every five to seven years. As these centres undergo a physical makeover, stallholders often use the months-long downtime to mull over their future in the business.

It is not uncommon for some to call it quits, resulting in the renovated centre having a new mix of food and stallholders.

At Chinatown Complex, for instance, stallholder Francesca Ung, 38, is thinking about whether to relocate her Penang Chik Ho Liao stall. Set up last year, it offers the Penang version of popular food such as nasi lemak, rojak and mee goreng.

Though she has seen her business break even most months, she feels it ought to be better: "Tourists and young people who are more willing to try our flavours don't know about this hawker centre because it's not visible from the street. Though the renovation is necessary, I don't think it will improve footfall to our stall."

At Block 84 Marine Parade Central, the hawker centre and market has already seen a couple of departures, with the completion of its renovation delayed by three months.

One of them is Katong (Jago) Teochew Mee Pok Kway Teow Mee stall, which has relocated to a coffee shop in Block 80, Marine Parade Central. "The renovation would take too long to finish, and I needed a regular income," said owner Chang Lau Meng, 62, who moved to Block 80 last year.

Closed in March last year for the makeover, the centre's initial completion date was this month. But it has been extended to May.

A National Environment Agency (NEA) spokesman attributed the delay to "unforeseen underground services affecting the progress of sanitary and drainage works", as well as other renovation works. Underground services may include electrical, gas, water and telecom cables.

At Chinatown Complex, which is about 35 years old, two of the newer stalls have packed up and left even before the place closes on Friday.

Western food stall Silly's Western, which opened in June 2017, shut its doors at the end of last month while Japanese-Italian fusion stall Sutachi did so on Jan 19, just about a year after its opening in December 2017.

Sutachi's co-owner Gay Yu Ting, 32, said the stall was confronted with such problems as the rising cost of ingredients and the stagnant growth in customers.

"Three months without any income will be tough on us and (the renovation) really prompted us to think about the business more thoroughly," she said.

Some of the major works at Chinatown Complex include replacing the

waste pipes, servicing and repairing the exhaust and fire protection systems, and upgrading the public toilets, said Jalan Besar Town Council.

Meanwhile, the Marine Parade centre is undergoing tiling and roofing works as well as getting new

sewer and water pipes plus improved drainage, among other things, said the NEA.

Hawkers and stallholders at both centres do not pay rent during the renovation period, ST understands. But they also do not get any financial compensation and no temporary food centres are set up for them to make a living.

The NEA said the repairs and decoration works will not lead to higher rents.

Still, a 55-year-old Marine Parade stallholder, who wanted to be identified only as Mr Zheng, said the delay is frustrating.

The father of three, whose children are aged between 19 and 26, has been doing various part-time sales jobs at places such as pasar

malams and flower stalls since the centre closed.

"There was more work during the Chinese New Year period but now, it's not so easy to find jobs. It's difficult to live day-to-day like this without any financial security," said Mr Zheng, who ran a ban mian, or Chinese noodle, stall at the Marine Parade centre for the past 15 years.

But Mr Lim Lee Chye, who sits on the committee of the Marine Parade Central market and runs a household goods store there, is sanguine about the delay.

"It's better to fix any issues now than to have problems crop up later," said the 73-year-old, who gets by on his savings.

yuenjin@sph.com.sg

Saudi Arabia names a princess as ambassador to US



Princess Reema bint Bandar bin Sultan's appointment appears to be aimed at turning a new page in ties with the United States. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ISTANBUL • Saudi Arabia appointed a princess as its new ambassador to the United States, the first time the kingdom had named a woman to such a post.

The appointment of Princess Reema bint Bandar bin Sultan by royal decree on Saturday came amid strained relations between Saudi Arabia and the United States over the killing of Saudi dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi agents in Istanbul last October.

While members of Congress have pursued measures to hold Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman responsible for the killing and to cut military aid to the Saudi war in Yemen, President Donald Trump has stood by the kingdom, seeing it as a valuable Middle Eastern ally and reliable buyer of US weapons.

Princess Reema will replace Prince Khalid bin Salman, a son of King Salman and a younger brother of the Crown Prince, who took the post in 2017. Also on Saturday,

Prince Khalid was named Deputy Defence Minister under the Crown Prince, who heads the ministry.

Since his father ascended the throne in 2015, Crown Prince Mohammed has pushed for vast changes in Saudi Arabia. He has called for a more diversified economy, granted women the right to drive, expanded entertainment options and moderated the kingdom's official religious rhetoric, while also spearheading a disastrous military intervention in Yemen and other policies that have raised doubts about his judgment.

The appointment of Princess Reema appeared to be aimed at turning a new page after the killing of Mr Khashoggi, who lived in Virginia and was a columnist for The Wash-

ington Post, while also emphasising the kingdom's social reforms in the capital of its most important ally.

In addition to representing the new possibilities now available for Saudi women, Princess Reema is the daughter of Prince Bandar bin Sultan, a towering figure in Saudi diplomacy who served as the kingdom's ambassador to the US from 1983 to 2005. He was so close with the Bush family that he was often referred to as "Bandar Bush".

Princess Reema spent many years in Washington while her father was ambassador and graduated with a degree in museum studies from George Washington University. She recently served in the kingdom's sports commission.

NYTIMES

Budget Direct insurance

2019 ★★★★★ feefo^{co} Gold Trusted Service Award

I saved \$322.53 with Budget Direct Insurance.

Elyn Quek
2018 Hyundai Elantra

Verified savings from our customer. Actual savings on premiums may vary based on various factors.

Car insurance due?

Pay Less or Get \$100*

If your current car insurance renewal quote is lower than ours, we will give you \$100, even if you don't buy.

Dedicated claims service

Part of global group

No agent commission

Save more at budgetdirect.com.sg/savenow or call 6540 2100 today!

*Full details at budgetdirect.com.sg. Terms and conditions apply.

Budget Direct Insurance policies are protected under the Policy Owners' Protection Scheme which is administered by the Singapore Deposit Insurance Corporation (SDIC). Coverage for your Policy is automatic and no further action is needed from you. For details on the types of benefits under the scheme and the coverage limits, you may visit the websites of the SDIC (www.sdic.org.sg) or the General Insurance Association of Singapore (GIA) (www.gia.com.sg) or contact us at help@budgetdirect.com.sg.

WORLD

TONNES OF STEEL PRODUCED A YEAR FROM
CHINESE-INDONESIAN INDUSTRIAL PARK A13



Above: Some 100 bodyguards for North Korean leader Kim Jong Un arriving yesterday at Noi Bai International Airport in Hanoi, Vietnam, on a North Korean cargo plane ahead of the summit.
Right: Mr Kim Jong Un (centre) being sent off by his top officials on Saturday as he boarded a train in Pyongyang bound for Hanoi, for his second summit with US President Donald Trump. PHOTOS: EPA-EFE, DPA

Trump-Kim summit

Fate of inter-Korea projects tied to outcome of talks

Road map and timetable needed so both nations will keep to promises: Experts

Chang May Choon
South Korea Correspondent
In Seoul

The resumption of inter-Korea projects, and a potential declaration to end the war between the two countries, is hinging on the outcome of the second summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un

and US President Donald Trump. Talks between the two leaders – to be held on Wednesday and Thursday in Vietnamese capital Hanoi – are expected to focus on concrete action by the North towards denuclearisation and corresponding US measures that can include partial lifting of sanctions.

Experts say the Hanoi summit, which comes eight months after Mr

Trump and Mr Kim first agreed to work towards “complete denuclearisation” at their first meeting in Singapore, must produce a road map and timetable so both countries will keep their promises.

“Both sides are putting down all the items they could trade on the table and looking at how and when,” said Sogang University’s Professor Kim Jae-chun, referring to pre-summit talks between US special representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun and his North Korean counterpart Kim Hyok Chol.

“There will be agreements, but



I’m not sure if the two sides have narrowed down their differences,” Prof Kim told The Straits Times.

North Korean leader Kim has expressed willingness to destroy the regime’s main nuclear facility in Yongbyon, but the caveat is reciprocal action from the United States.

What he wants is the resumption of two suspended inter-Korea projects – the Kaesong Industrial Complex and Mount Kumgang tours. This is also covered by South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who has played a key role mediating Trump-Kim talks and is keen to

kick-start cross-border cooperation. Prof Kim said, “President Moon is more than willing to shoulder the burden of reopening Kaesong and Kumgang, which could bring relief to Mr Trump amid US scepticism towards the second summit.”

Mr Kim may, in return, pledge to

dismantle the Yongbyon facility and promise to stop the North’s uranium enrichment programme, he said.

Another possible outcome, according to Dr Graham Ong-Webb of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, is Mr Kim expressing a commitment to dismantle

parts of the North’s intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capability according to a timetable.

“A country’s nuclear capability is multi-layered and the layer that threatens the US the most is North Korea’s ICBMs that can reach most American cities. By giving up

ICBMs in the near future, North Korea’s nuclear capability will regress to pre-2017 levels which could threaten only US bases in South Korea, Japan and Guam. This may actually be sufficient for North Korea’s deterrence needs,” Dr Ong-Webb told The Straits Times.

But Prof Kim warned of a possible “sequencing problem” later and added: “Will North Korea dismantle its nuclear facility first or will the lifting of sanctions come first? It will all come down to who is willing to take the first step.”

changmc@sph.com.sg

Washington setting more realistic expectations

Charissa Yong
US Correspondent

Going into the second Trump-Kim summit, the US has been demanding the full and final denuclearisation of North Korea but is setting its expectations more realistically.

Pyeongang and Washington are not even on the same page on the

meaning of denuclearisation.

Negotiations are still seeking to advance a shared understanding of what denuclearisation means, a senior administration official told reporters last Thursday.

“I don’t know if North Korea has made the choice yet to denuclearise, but the reason we’re engaged in this is we believe there is the possibility that North Korea will make

the choice to fully denuclearise,” said the official.

Former US nuclear negotiator Victor Cha said: “Part of the deal with negotiating with North Korea is there are a lot of things that you want, and there’s an order in which you want it.”

“But you find very quickly that if you don’t want the negotiation to fail, you start to lower your stan-

dards. And you start looking at things the North Koreans put on the table, rather than looking at the things that you put on the table.”

Dr Cha, who took part in the Six-Party talks of the last decade with North Korea as deputy head of the US delegation and is now with the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, said North Korea has programmes it

would be willing to give up at the summit and could even let international bodies in to monitor the decommissioning of certain sites.

CSIS Korea-watcher Sue Mi Terry said these could include the Pung-gye-ri nuclear test site, the Dongchang-ri satellite launch site and the Yongbyon nuclear complex.

But she and Dr Cha pointed out that Pyongyang had already

promised to shut down some of these sites.

Said Dr Cha: “That is negotiating your past, things you don’t need any more, and it’s negotiating your future – things you promise not to do in the future, so you’re not actually really giving up anything. In the meantime, I’m certain there are going to be clear demands on the US to give up things very much in the present, whether it’s exercises, deployment of troops or sanctions.”

Experts said the notion of North Korea clearing out its nuclear programmes in one fell swoop would not happen, but there were certain meaningful concessions from Py-

ongyang the US could count as a win.

One such concession could be a freeze in fissile material production that went beyond the current informal freeze on nuclear testing, said Nuclear Threat Initiative fuel cycle and verification senior director Richard Johnson.

“It’s not ideal, but it’s a starting point. If we can see the production of highly enriched uranium and plutonium cease – in a verifiable way – that would be a positive step,” said Mr Johnson, a former State Department nuclear proliferation expert.

CSIS nuclear expert Rebecca Hersman said the revelation of a few undeclared facilities, or previ-

ously undisclosed uranium facilities, could be meaningful.

Even better would be getting inspectors on the ground or electronic monitoring of nuclear facilities, or allowing samples to be taken or to improve the international community’s accounting of the nuclear material North Korea possesses, she said, adding that such measures would be better than “small, fig-leaf gestures of nothingness at Yongbyon.”

Experts were worried that Mr Trump could, when meeting Mr Kim in person, take an entirely different tack on ongoing negotiations and upend smaller con-

cessions painstakingly achieved, or put too much on the table.

“You never know what happens when you get leaders in a room,” said former US ambassador to South Korea Mark Lippert. “Sometimes, dynamics take over.”

Council on Foreign Relations senior fellow Scott Snyder said: “What I worry about is the President may want the peace most, more than the denuclearisation.”

He and others reckoned that a formal declaration ending the Korean War – which would be a political statement more than a binding legal document – was a likely outcome of the summit.

Ending the war could raise uncomfortable questions for the US about maintaining its 28,500-strong troop presence in South Korea, even though Mr Trump recently ruled out reducing the number of troops stationed there.

Dr Cha, who visited South Korea recently, said: “From the person on the street to sort of the highest levels of government, there’s sort of this mood now that the war is basically over. So let’s just say it’s over.”

“And it’s actually difficult to argue against that. No one in this room wants to be against peace.”

charyong@sph.com.sg

China not ready to push for denuclearisation, say experts

Tan Dawn Wei
China Bureau Chief
In Beijing

China will be watching the Trump-Kim theatre unfold in neighbouring Vietnam with interest, but a looming deadline to end its trade war with the United States and preparations for its biggest annual political gathering will be major distractions this week.

If trade talks fail by this Friday, the US has promised to raise tariffs on US\$200 billion (\$270 billion) worth of Chinese goods from 10 to 25 per cent, although President Donald Trump has said he was ready to push back the March 1 deadline while talks extended two days to yesterday.

China’s “two sessions” or lianghui – the yearly meetings involving the country’s top legislature and top advisory body – will also kick off on Sunday in Beijing.

Despite China ultimately wanting

a denuclearised Korean peninsula as much as any other country, the time for it to happen is not at this summit, said political scientist Steve Tsang.

“Even though the Chinese have a policy that there should be no nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula, they are not at this stage pushing for the North Koreans to give up all their nuclear weapons, which they know Mr Kim Jong Un will not do anyway,” said Professor Tsang, who is director of the China Institute at Soas University of London.

“China has a trade war pending with the Trump administration. Why would the Chinese want Mr Trump to feel confident that he can just bully his way around? It’s not in the interest of the Chinese Communist Party to have the problem removed at this point.”

Mr Trump and President Xi Jinping could meet some time next month in Florida to seal the terms of their trade negotiation.

But at this week’s Hanoi summit,

Beijing will want to see some progress in the talks, and perhaps the easing of some sanctions, which would legitimise its economic assistance to Pyongyang and allow greater cross-border trade.

As Pyongyang’s main ally, Beijing has long faced global pressure to cut off economic help to its impoverished neighbour, reined in by United Nations sanctions.

If Mr Kim had previously demonstrated that his most important diplomatic relationship is with China by his four visits to Beijing last year and this year, he has notched that up by agreeing to take a train across China to reach Hanoi for the summit.

“It is an interesting signal that the Chinese trusts China; that even though he is travelling a long distance across land, he feels safe and well-protected,” said S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies associate research fellow Shawn Ho.

Last year, Mr Kim also had support from the Chinese for his first



A Chinese tourist boat plying the Yalu river yesterday. North Korea can be seen in the background. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is scheduled to meet US President Donald Trump for their second summit in Hanoi this week. PHOTO: AGENCY FRANCE-PRESSE

summit with Mr Trump in Singapore when he flew on an Air China plane to the island state.

While China has no direct role in this week’s talks, it will want to make sure it has some degree of influence over North Korea’s actions, especially given that the two countries share a border.

China will support the eventual signing of a peace treaty to formally end the Korean War, which will remove at least one rationale for heavy US military presence on its doorstep.

What China will not want to see emerging from the talks is Mr Kim

leaning towards the US, especially with Mr Trump’s promise to help North Korea achieve economic prosperity. But that is unlikely to happen, according to analysts.

“The fact that Mr Kim and President Xi have met for times is a strong indication that the Chinese are keen to make sure its interests are protected,” said Mr Ho.

Mr Kim’s first overseas trip as leader was to Beijing in March last year, which was quickly followed by two more visits, just before and after the Singapore summit.

Last month, he met Mr Xi in what

was widely seen as a prelude to the second Trump-Kim meeting.

Speculation has increased over whether Mr Kim will visit Beijing again after the Hanoi summit.

“Given the precedence set before and after last year’s Singapore summit, and his visit this year, it is quite possible he would visit for a debrief again,” said Dr Zhao, a nuclear policy fellow at the Carnegie-Tsinghua Centre for Global Policy.

dawnwtan@sph.com.sg

N. Korea tells Trump to ignore critics as Kim heads to summit

SEOUL/HANOI • North Korea warned US President Donald Trump yesterday not to listen to US critics who were disrupting efforts to improve ties, as its leader, Mr Kim Jong Un, made his way across China by train to a second summit with Mr Trump in Vietnam.

The two leaders will meet in Hanoi on Wednesday and Thursday, eight months after their historic summit in Singapore, the first between a sitting United States president and a North Korean leader, where they pledged to work towards the complete denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula.

But their vaguely worded agreement has produced few results and US Democratic senators and US security officials have warned Mr Trump against cutting a deal that would do little to curb North Korea’s nuclear ambitions.

The North’s KCNA state news

agency said such opposition was aimed at derailing the talks. “If the present US administration reads others’ faces, lending an ear to others, it may face the shattered dream of the improvement of the relations with the DPRK and world peace and miss the rare historic opportunity,” the news agency said in a commentary, referring to North Korea by the initials of its official name, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

The Trump administration has pressed the North to give up its nuclear weapons programme, which, combined with its missile capabilities, poses a threat to the US, before it can expect any concessions.

In a series of tweets yesterday on the eve of his departure for the summit, Mr Trump said North Korea could become one of the world’s “great economic powers” if it relinquished its nuclear arsenal.

“Chairman Kim realises, perhaps



US Democratic senators and security officials have warned US President Donald Trump, who is meeting North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Vietnam, against cutting a deal that would do little to curb North Korea’s nuclear ambitions. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

better than anyone else, that without nuclear weapons, his country could fast become one of the great economic powers anywhere in the world,” he wrote.

Mr Trump said he and Mr Kim both expect a continuation of the

progress made at the first summit in Singapore. He also praised China and Russia for enforcing sanctions on North Korea, while insisting that he had a “great relationship with Mr Kim.”

“The last thing China wants are large-scale nuclear

weapons right next door. Sanctions placed on the border by China and Russia have been very helpful.”

Mr Trump has previously said he had no pressing schedule for North Korea’s denuclearisation, hinting at a more gradual, recipro-

From Singapore to Hanoi: What has happened since

• **June 12, 2018:** US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, after months of trading fiery rhetoric and insults, sit down for their first summit in Singapore. They ink an agreement to establish new relations, build peace, work towards the “complete denuclearisation” of the Korean peninsula, and recover war remains Mr Trump also suspends military drills with South Korea.

• **June 19:** Mr Kim makes his third visit to China. He briefs Chinese President Xi Jinping about his summit with Mr Trump.

• **June 27:** A website monitoring North Korea says the regime has continued to improve its main nuclear facility in Yongbyon “at a rapid pace”, citing satellite imagery.

• **July 7:** US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, after a visit to Pyongyang, says both sides “made progress” in their talks. But North Korean officials accuse the US of making “gangster-like” demands and call the talks “extremely regrettable”.

• **July 24:** Reports emerge that North Korea may have started dismantling parts of a key rocket launch site.

• **Aug 1:** Some remains of US soldiers who died in the Korean War are returned to the US. Fifty-five cases containing the remains are flown to Hawaii for identification.

• **Aug 4:** North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho says at a forum in Singapore that his country is committed to the June summit agreement, but criticises the US for undermining the confidence in the process.

• **Aug 6:** North Korean state media urges the US to lift sanctions.

• **Aug 20:** The UN says North Korea’s nuclear activities have not stopped.

• **Aug 24:** Mr Trump cancels a trip by Mr Pompeo to Pyongyang, citing a lack of progress in denuclearisation. He blames China for undermining the Beijing retaliates, calling US

accusations “irresponsible” and “contrary to basic facts”.

• **Sept 5:** Mr Kim reiterates his denuclearisation commitment to visiting South Korean officials, adding that his faith in Mr Trump remains unchanged. He also offers a possible timeline for dismantling his nuclear programme.

• **Sept 10:** Mr Kim sends a “very warm” letter to Mr Trump, asking for a second meeting.

• **Sept 20:** Mr Kim welcomes South Korean President Moon Jae-in in Pyongyang. He reiterates a commitment to denuclearisation and expresses willingness to shut down its main nuclear facility if the US takes “corresponding measures”. The two countries also sign an agreement to ease military tension.

• **Sept 29:** Mr Trump tells his supporters at a rally that he and Mr Kim “fell in love” over “great letters”.

• **Oct 1:** The two Koreas begin to remove landmines along the demilitarised zone.

• **Oct 7:** Mr Pompeo, after a visit to Pyongyang, says Mr Kim has agreed to meet Mr Trump. He adds that the North will allow international inspectors to visit its nuclear sites.

• **Nov 2:** North Korean state media warns that the country will seriously consider a return to building nuclear weapons if the US does not lift sanctions.

• **Jan 1, 2019:** Mr Kim renews his denuclearisation commitment but warns that he may have to “seek a new path” if the US keeps up pressure and sanctions.

• **Jan 8:** Mr Kim visits China to meet Mr Xi, in what is seen as a prelude to the second Trump-Kim summit.

• **Jan 28:** Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe expresses willingness to meet Mr Kim and restore bilateral ties.

• **Feb 5:** Mr Trump says he will meet Mr Kim in Vietnam on Feb 27-28.

• **Feb 19:** Mr Trump says he is in “no rush” to push for North Korea’s denuclearisation.

• **Feb 22:** Mr Trump rules out reducing US troops in South Korea, saying it is “not one of the things on the table” for the Hanoi summit.

• **Chang May Choon**

Outcome of the first summit

What United States President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un agreed on during their first summit held in Singapore last June:

- Establish new relations in accordance with the desire of the peoples of the two countries for peace and prosperity.
- Join efforts to build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean peninsula.
- Reaffirm the Panmunjom Declaration under which the North commits to work towards complete denuclearisation.

- Commit to recovering the remains of prisoners of war and those missing in action, including the immediate repatriation of those already identified.

WHAT DENUCLEARISATION MEANS TO THE US

Complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of North Korea.

WHAT DENUCLEARISATION MEANS TO NORTH KOREA

To remove nuclear threats not only from the North but also the South, which will include US nuclear weapons.

cal approach, long favoured by Pyongyang.

In a letter to Mr Trump last week, three Democratic chairmen of key House committees accused the administration of withholding information on the negotiations with North Korea. “There are ample reasons to be sceptical that Chairman Kim is committed to a nuclear-free North Korea,” the lawmakers wrote.

US intelligence officials also recently testified to Congress that North Korea was unlikely to ever give up its entire nuclear arsenal. KCNA, referring to US fears of the North’s weapons, said if this week’s talks ended without results, “the US people will never be cleared of the security threats that threw them into panic”.

While few details of Mr Kim’s trip have been announced, North Korea’s state media has confirmed that Mr Kim left Pyongyang by train on Saturday afternoon for the summit.

In rare, revealing coverage of Mr Kim’s travel while it is still going on, the North’s Rodong Sinmun newspaper featured photographs of him getting a red-carpet send-off in Pyongyang and waving from a train carriage door while holding a cigarette. Mr Kim is being accompanied by senior North Korean officials as well as his influential sister on the trip. REUTERS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE



The relocation site of the US airbase that Okinawa residents rejected in the referendum on Sunday. What Okinawans really want is to move the base off their island, not to a remote site within the prefecture. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Okinawa votes 'no' to US airbase shift

73% reject plan to move facility elsewhere on island but vote not legally binding for Tokyo govt

Walter Sim
Japan Correspondent
In Tokyo

Okinawa residents resoundingly voted against the relocation of a key American airbase yesterday, in a result that is bound to inflame tensions between the prefectural and national governments.

Some 72.8 per cent of voters said no to moving the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma from densely populated Ginowan to the coastal Henoko district, with 96 per cent of the ballots counted last night.

The national government wants the base moved because of national security and safety concerns, but what Okinawans really want is to move the base off their island. Turnout was 52.48 per cent of the more than 1.15 million people aged 18 and above who were eligible to vote.

The vote is merely symbolic as it is not legally binding on the central government and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has said Tokyo would ignore the outcome. Washington also backs the move.

The central government has already drawn flak for being "undemocratic" were it really to ignore an overwhelming result. This could reverberate in elections this year.

Mr Fumio Kishida, policy chief of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), said the party was committed to protecting people's lives and defending Japan's territory. This

means, he added, avoiding the use of Futenma while finding ways to reduce the burden on Okinawa.

Okinawa Governor Denny Tamaki, who was elected by an enormous margin last year on an anti-base platform, will travel to Tokyo this week for talks with the Cabinet and the US Embassy, the Asahi Shimbun reported.

Voters had three options: yes, no, or neither. The last option was added after five of Okinawa's 41 municipalities that are led by the LDP said they would boycott the referendum in the event of a binary choice.

By a prefectural ordinance, Mr Tamaki has to "respect" the outcome if over one-quarter of the eligible electorate, or about 288,000 people, vote for a single outcome. With the threshold achieved, Mr Tamaki will need to notify Mr Abe and US President Donald Trump of the result.

Okinawa has long been upset by what it sees as a disproportionate military burden, a legacy of nearly 30 years of US administration following World War II. The prefecture accounts for just 0.6 per cent of Japan's total land area, but hosts about 70 per cent of the total US base area and more than half of the 47,000 US personnel stationed in Japan.

Futenma, which has been billed as the "most dangerous base in the world" as it is located in a residential area, has drawn noise and safety complaints. In a 2017 incident, a window from a US helicopter fell onto the grounds of an Okinawa elementary school.

A spate of high-profile crimes committed by US base workers has exacerbated the situation, including drink-driving, rape and murder.

The trigger for the relocation was the 1995 gang rape and abduction



An Okinawa resident voting yesterday on the relocation of US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to a newly planned base in the coastal Henoko district. The referendum is merely symbolic and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has said Tokyo would ignore the outcome. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

of a 12-year-old schoolgirl by three US servicemen, which led thousands to protest.

A prefectural referendum a year later, on scaling back US bases and reviewing a key agreement on the deployment of US troops, saw nearly 90 per cent voting in favour.

Yet the Henoko site, too, is controversial given the need for extensive land reclamation. Critics say this will not only ruin its pristine beaches, but also damage a delicate marine ecosystem home to the endangered dugong and coral reefs.

The Henoko relocation plan has been on the table since April 1996, and in its stalling tactics, Okinawa wants to force Tokyo's hand to agree to move the base out of the prefecture altogether.

But the central government maintains that the current plan is the "only solution" to reduce the dangers attributed to the Futenma base, given Okinawa's strategic importance from its proximity to both the East and South China Seas, as well as Taiwan.

The prefecture, too, administers

the Senkaku/Diaoyu islets claimed by China, which has made encroachments into Japanese waters.

Okinawa-born activist Jinshiro Motoyama, 27, took a gap year from his graduate studies at Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo to lead a civic movement against the relocation. He told Kyodo News last night: "This is a major development for the democracy of Okinawa. I want the government to act according to the popular will."

waltsim@sph.com.sg

Malaysian minister's aide apologises for criticising RTM

CONTRITE

Knowing now that RTM was merely following its SOP (standard operating procedure) in showing only the prime minister's speech during the 'live' telecast of the CNY celebration in Seremban, I wish to apologise for my Facebook post dated February 17, 2019.



MR LIM SWEE KUAN, the Malaysian Transport Minister's press secretary, in a statement posted on his Facebook page.



Mr Lim Swee Kuan, Transport Minister Anthony Loke's press secretary, criticised state-owned RTM for not airing Mr Loke's Chinese New Year speech. PHOTO: FACEBOOK/LIM SWEE KUAN

KUALA LUMPUR • The Malaysian Transport Minister's press secretary has apologised for saying "heads must roll" after national broadcaster RTM failed to air the minister's Chinese New Year speech.

Mr Lim Swee Kuan also said sorry for accusing RTM of trying to "sabotage" the Pakatan Harapan government by not broadcasting speeches made by Mr Anthony Loke and Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar Aminuddin Harun at a Chinese New Year event, Malaysian media reported.

"What is this if this is not sabotage?" Mr Lim said in an allegation he posted on his Facebook page on Feb 17. "Heads must roll over the highly possible sabotage against the government administration."

Mr Lim's sharp criticism led the public to question the extent of media freedom and Transport Minis-

ter Loke has distanced himself from the secretary's remarks.

Communications and Multimedia Minister Gobind Singh Deo also lambasted Mr Lim, pointing out last week that state-owned RTM is required to air only the Prime Minister's speeches, Malaysian media reported.

A contrite Mr Lim said in a statement on his Facebook page yesterday: "Knowing now that RTM was merely following its SOP (standard operating procedure) in showing only the prime minister's speech

during the live telecast of the CNY celebration in Seremban, I wish to apologise for my Facebook post dated February 17, 2019.

"I support media independence and media freedom and would love that one day RTM can be truly transformed into high quality, professional public broadcaster."

Mr Lim also said he fully supports Mr Gobind's proposal for a media council, saying it is "the right way to go to redefine the important role of state-owned media".

Japan and S. Korea in fresh spat over upcoming naval drills

TOKYO • Japan and South Korea are engaged in a fresh spat – this time over whether Japan will participate in multilateral naval exercises set to take place off Busan in late April – amid renewed hostility over Japan's past colonisation of the Korean peninsula.

Japanese Minister of Defence Takeshi Iwaya told reporters on Saturday that Japanese military vessels would not enter the port of Busan, but that they would take part in the remainder of the joint exercise programme, according to a transcript of his comments on the defence ministry's website.

"From the perspective of East Asian security, ties between Japan and South Korea, as well as between Japan, South Korea and the US, are extremely important," Mr Iwaya said.

South Korea's Ministry of Defence said in a statement on its web-

site that Japan would take part in a planning meeting, but would not send ships to take part in the multilateral operations off Busan.

This decision was announced at a conference to prepare the drills last week, the defence ministry said.

A total of eight countries are scheduled to participate in the drills off Busan from April 29-May 2: the United States, South Korea, China, Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and India, according to defence ministry official Kim Eun-kyung.

"Japan will take part in the meeting held on land," the official said.

"They will not send ships to Busan – this was decided at the conference."

The two countries have been increasingly at loggerheads in recent months over whether Japan has shown sufficient contrition for its 1910-1945 colonisation of the Korean Peninsula. BLOOMBERG

Central Sulawesi sees gains from tie-up with China firm

Non-BRI project in province turns town into world's biggest nickel industrial park

Wahyudi Soeriaatmadja
Indonesia Correspondent
In Jakarta

Indonesia's Central Sulawesi is seeing how Chinese investment has benefited the local economy as exports from the province jumped 16-fold over the past five years and thousands of jobs were created after Chinese steelmaker Tsingshan turned Morowali, a sleepy town in the province's south-eastern district, into the world's largest nickel industrial park.

Unlike projects under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the Indonesia Morowali Industrial Park (IMIP) is a business-to-business endeavour with no government guarantee. It is a joint venture between Tsingshan and local partner Bintang Delapan.

The project has received strong endorsement from the leaders of both countries and enjoyed commercial financing from the state-owned China Development Bank.

The industrial park project was born at a bilateral summit between China's President Xi Jinping and Indonesia's then President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in 2013.

At that meeting, Mr Xi conveyed a plan to construct a 21st-century maritime silk road. Both leaders then witnessed the signing of the joint-venture agreement for the Morowali project.

The maritime silk road is the sea route part of the Belt and Road Initiative, China's geopolitical strat-



A cargo terminal in the Indonesia Morowali Industrial Park. It has its own seaport and power plants, with an airport to be completed this year. The park is expected to soon produce three million tonnes of stainless steel slabs a year. PHOTO: IMIP

egy offering infrastructure project investments in countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Pakistan to gain greater influence in the littoral regions across the historical Silk Road.

But various countries, according to observers, have fallen into a debt trap from overborrowing.

Sri Lanka, for example, has been forced to give up operations of its Hambantota Port, which China helped to finance and build.

The construction of the deep-sea port, allowing bigger vessels to dock there, was a costly project Sri Lanka had no need of as its meagre exports did not require a port for larger vessels. The financing for the project, guaranteed by the Sri Lanka government, was valued at US\$1.5 billion (S\$2 billion), which it struggled to repay.

Malaysia halted billions of dollars of BRI projects and Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has charged China with attempting to secure influence through debt-funded infrastructure projects that recipient



STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

countries cannot afford.

Professor Hikmahanto Juwana, a legal expert at the University of Indonesia, agrees with Tun Dr Mahathir's concerns, telling The Straits Times: "Other objectives of helping include gaining market access in certain countries."

"It is not something that only

China is doing... Everyone else too, including the US," he added.

The IMIP, which began construction four years ago on 2,000ha of land, boasts the ability to produce two million tonnes of stainless steel slabs a year, which will soon rise to three million tonnes, or 6 per cent of global output.

The joint venture and tenants have spent at least US\$4 billion on the industrial park, building facilities such as plants to process raw nickel into intermediate products, which are processed into the finished products of stainless steel slabs. Also to be completed this year is an airport to cater mainly to the industrial park, which has its own seaport and power plants.

IMIP and its tenants employed a total of 25,662 workers at the end of 2017, of whom 18,556 are Indonesians and the rest mainly Chinese nationals.

Morowali has now become a main income driver for the Central Sulawesi province.

The province's total exports last year were worth US\$5.11 billion, compared with US\$297 million five years ago, according to the website of the province's agency for statistics.

The jump reflects the successful climb up the value chain by Central Sulawesi as today's exports are dominated by steel and stainless steel – accounting for two-thirds of the total – compared with five years ago, when exports were dominated by cheap raw minerals, including nickel ores.

IMIP and its partners have also recently started the construction of a plant to produce battery-grade nickel chemicals for electric car batteries, with commercial production expected next year.

Projects related to the BRI in Indonesia are valued only around US\$5 billion, based on a loose estimate and including projects without a government guarantee, according to a senior Indonesian diplomat. This figure is dwarfed by those in Pakistan, valued at more than US\$60 billion, and Malaysia.

BRI has been used as a tool by China amid rising rivalry in the region with the United States. The US has occasionally told Indonesian officials that the South-east Asian country is getting too close to China and receiving large investment projects, but the statistics speak otherwise – Indonesia lags behind in terms of benefits from China's BRI strategies.

"China said we are a minion of the US, while the US said we are a minion of China. We are no one's minion. This is just them playing us," a senior Indonesian government official told The Straits Times.

wahyudis@sph.com.sg

Chinese projects in Indonesia

Chinese investors have pumped in at least US\$4 billion (S\$5.4 billion) with their local partners in the Morowali industrial park in Central Sulawesi.

The investments do not come under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), but are heavily endorsed by leaders of both countries, and include a 1,000MW coal-fired power plant, an airport and a steel plant with a capacity of 3.5 million tonnes a year.

The Indonesian government, meanwhile, has offered several strategic projects under the BRI, including a multibillion-dollar hydropower plant in North Kalimantan's Kayan river, a US\$1.6 billion power plant in Bali, and an industrial park in North Sumatra, according to the maritime affairs coordinating ministry.

None of the planned projects has started, Maritime Affairs Coordinating Minister Luhut Pandjaitan said in a reply to a Straits Times query.

The ministry was tasked by President Joko Widodo to take the lead in the BRI-related projects.

Indonesia's first high-speed train – the 150km Jakarta-Bandung high-speed rail project – is also not listed as a BRI project after the Indonesian government, amid growing domestic criticism, was forced to reject China's request to issue guarantees to repay debts to creditors if the project does not run profitably.

The project, which is still in its early stages, is partially financed by the China Development Bank.

Critics of the project have cited high investment risks as the Jakarta-Bandung trip is too short a distance for a high-speed train service.

They fear that the service may not attract enough passengers to cover operational costs.

Wahyudi Soeriaatmadja

At least 300 cars destroyed in India air show fire



Firefighters extinguishing smouldering cars after a fire at the carpark on Saturday during Aero India 2019, one of the world's biggest air shows, at the Yelahanka air base in Bangalore, India. At least 300 vehicles were caught in the blaze, which spread rapidly due to dry grass and strong winds. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW DELHI • At least 300 cars were destroyed in a fire at the carpark of a government-run air show in India's southern city of Bangalore.

Officials said no one was injured. The cause of the fire on Saturday could have been a lit cigarette that was disposed of on the grass in the open field, Indian broadcaster NDTV reported, citing official sources.

City fire services chief M.N. Reddi said the blaze at Aero India 2019 had spread rapidly due to dry grass and strong winds.

Huge plumes of black smoke were seen rising from the burnt vehicles near the Yelahanka air base, where

an estimated 100 aircraft were also parked for the biennial event.

A probe has been ordered into the cause of the fire, India's Defence Ministry said.

The airshow was temporarily suspended while the fire spread, and no planes took off from the air base until the flames were doused, reports said.

Aero India, which is organised by the defence ministry, is among the biggest air shows in the world.

Saturday's incident comes after a collision between two jets of the Indian Air Force's aerobatic team during rehearsals last Tuesday. The collision killed one pilot and injured two. DPA

Freed Indonesian terror convict dies of heart attack

Nur Asyiqin Mohamad Salleh
Indonesia Correspondent
In Jakarta

Indonesian terror convict Noim Bashir, released from prison last Tuesday after serving a six-year sentence, died of a heart attack just days after walking free.

Mr Noim, a nephew of hardline cleric Abu Bakar Bashir, the alleged mastermind of the 2012 Bali bombings, died at a hospital in Solo, Central Java, on Saturday at 9pm. He was 45 years old.

Mr Noim's wife, Ms Nunik, said he was on his way to a friend's wedding when he complained of pain in the chest and headed to the hospital instead. She said her husband

had long suffered from asthma.

Ms Nunik told local media: "When he arrived at the emergency room, he was no longer conscious."

She added that in the eyes of his family, her husband had fought for the rights of the Muslim community.

An hour before his death, Mr Noim had met Mr Abdul Rohim Bashir, Abu Bakar Bashir's third son.

Mr Noim was sentenced to six

years in prison after he was found guilty of involvement in a terror outfit. He was initially set to be released from prison in May, but earned a three-month sentence reduction.

Controversy raged last month when President Joko Widodo considered releasing Abu Bakar on "humanitarian" grounds because of the 80-year-old's poor health.

He soon backed down on plans to free Abu Bakar without conditions, stressing that the cleric must pledge allegiance to the nation and to the state ideology, Pancasila, before he could walk free.

Abu Bakar has thus far refused to do so.

asyiqins@sph.com.sg

NO SURGERY EYE BAG REMOVAL. SMOOTH, TIGHT & FIRM SKIN OF FACE & BODY.

Dark circles, droopy eyelids, micro-lifting face & neck, acne scars, fatty tummy, thighs & arm. FDA-approved Profound® system. 30mins. No Pain. Safe. Natural looking results.

Come attend a friendly talk by Ministry of Health Accredited Consultant Plastic Surgeon, Dr JJ Chua MBBS (Spore), FRCS (Edin), FRCS (Glas)

Mt Elizabeth Medical Centre (Orchard Road), Level 2, Seminar Room
Saturday 2 March,
1 – 3pm (Chinese), 3 – 5pm (English)

To register, call 6235 3235 (office hours) or WhatsApp 9753 5687 (anytime)
\$8 for seminar, refreshments, gifts & lucky draw. Limited Seats.
Aesthetic Surgery Pte Ltd

Pro-Brexit protesters holding placards and gathering outside the Houses of Parliament in Westminster, London, last Wednesday. PHOTO: REUTERS



May promises MPs a vote on Brexit deal by March 12

UK PM seeks changes to divorce package but some MPs may push for referendum this week

SHARM EL-SHEIKH (Egypt) • British Prime Minister Theresa May promised yesterday to offer lawmakers a vote on her Brexit deal by March 12, the latest delay in her attempt to win approval for a plan to ensure Britain's orderly departure from the European Union. As the United Kingdom's labyrinthine Brexit crisis goes down to the wire, she is making a last-ditch effort to get changes to

the divorce package, but lawmakers may try on Wednesday to grab control of Brexit in a series of parliamentary votes. After the British Parliament voted 432-202 against her deal in January, the worst defeat in modern British history, Mrs May promised to seek changes that would allow lawmakers to ratify the agreement and thus avoid a potentially disorderly exit.

On her way to Egypt for an EU-Arab League summit, Mrs May said further meetings in Brussels on securing changes to the deal ruled out a so-called meaningful vote in Parliament this week. Instead, the new "high noon" for Brexit, Mrs May and the British Parliament will be on March 12, just 17 days before Britain is due to leave on March 29. "We won't bring a meaningful vote to Parliament this week, but we will ensure that that happens by the 12th of March," she told reporters on board her plane. "It is still within our grasp to leave

the European Union with a deal on the 29th of March and that is what we are working to do." In Sharm El-Sheikh, Mrs May will try to win the backing of the EU's leaders to secure the changes and ease increasing frustration in Europe over the political impasse in Britain over a deal that was agreed with London in November. The EU has ruled out reopening the Withdrawal Agreement, though both sides are looking at a possible legal addendum to reassure lawmakers who worry that the Irish border backstop – an insurance policy to prevent the return of a hard border – could keep Britain trapped in the EU's orbit for years to come. Mrs May said: "We have been having positive talks with the European Union... As you know, I was in Brussels last week, my team will be back in Brussels again this coming week. They will be returning to Brussels on Tuesday. "I think what's important is that we are still in that process of working with the EU, looking at the ways in which we can resolve the challenge that Parliament raised." With the clock ticking down to March 29, Britain is in the deepest political crisis in half a century as it grapples with how to exit the

European project it joined in 1973. Both Britain's major parties fractured last week, losing lawmakers who cast their former parties as broken remnants of a political system that was in meltdown. Some lawmakers will seek to grab control of Brexit in a series of votes in the British Parliament on Wednesday, though such attempts have been defeated as Mrs May sought more time to get a deal. Before she set off for Egypt, three members of her Cabinet publicly split with government policy and said they would side with rebels and opposition parties to stop a no-deal Brexit. Meanwhile, senior figures in the opposition Labour Party said yesterday it was moving closer to supporting another Brexit referendum and could do so as early as this week. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has so far stuck to Labour policy to keep the option of a second referendum "on the table" if Mrs May's government fails to secure a deal with Brussels that can break an impasse in Parliament. But when asked whether this would be the week Labour comes out in support of a second referendum, the party's deputy leader Tom Watson told BBC TV: "It might be... We are getting closer to that point." REUTERS

Iran says cruise missile fired successfully from submarine

DUBAI • Iran successfully tested a cruise missile yesterday during naval exercises near the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's state media reported, at a time of heightened tensions with the United States. Teheran has, in the past, threatened to block the strait, a major oil shipping route at the mouth of the Gulf, in retaliation for any hostile US action, including attempts to halt Iranian oil exports through sanctions. In August, Washington said Iran had test-fired a short-range anti-ship missile in the strait during

naval drills it believed were intended as a warning following President Donald Trump's decision to reimpose sanctions on Teheran. "On the third day of the... exercises, a Ghadir-class Iranian navy submarine successfully launched a cruise missile," the official news agency Irna reported. Iran's other submarines, the Tareq and the new domestically built Fateh, have the same anti-ship capability, Irna quoted a military statement as saying. More than 100 vessels were tak-

ing part in the ongoing three-day war games in a vast area stretching from the Strait of Hormuz to the Indian Ocean, state media reported. Meanwhile, Iran's Revolutionary Guards yesterday accused "enemies" of Iran of trying to sabotage the country's missiles so that they would "explode mid-air" but said the bid was foiled. "They tried as best as they could to sabotage a small part, which we import, so that our missiles would not reach their target and explode mid-air," Fars news agency re-



The ground-to-ship short-range cruise missile Ghadir is seen in an Iranian Navy Office photo being test-fired in the Sea of Oman on Saturday. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

ported, quoting Guards aerospace commander Amir Ali Hajizadeh. He did not name any specific country. Iran's expansion of its missile programme has been met with expres-

sions of concern by the US and European countries. Teheran says the programme is meant to be defensive in nature. REUTERS, AGENCY FRANCE-PRESSE

WorldBriefs

High hopes for US-Taleban talks

KABUL • The US and the Taleban will meet today in Qatar for fresh talks seeking an end to 17 years of grinding conflict in Afghanistan, with the stakes ratcheting higher as the spring fighting season approaches. Marathon talks held in Doha last month stoked hopes of a breakthrough after both sides walked away with a "draft framework" that included a Taleban commitment to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a safe haven for international terror groups. But there is still no accord on a timetable for a US withdrawal or a ceasefire, both major issues on which previous efforts have foundered. AGENCY FRANCE-PRESSE

Toxic bootleg liquor kills 150 in India

GUWAHATI • At least 150 people have died from drinking toxic bootleg liquor in Assam, a north-eastern Indian state, in the country's second such tragedy this month. The authorities had estimated the number of dead at 84 on Saturday. Many more have been hospitalised as the Indian authorities try to pinpoint the source and round up the perpetrators. The Assam liquor tragedy comes almost two weeks after more than 100 people died from drinking tainted alcohol in two northern Indian states, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh, in the worst such case in the country since 2011. REUTERS

Emperor urges Japan to open up

TOKYO • Japan's Emperor Akihito urged his country to be open to the outside world at a ceremony marking 30 years of his reign yesterday, ahead of his abdication later this year. "Our country has cultivated its own culture as an island nation," he said at the ceremony in Tokyo. "As the world has been globalised, I think we are now required to be more open to the outside, establish our own position with wisdom and build relations with other countries sincerely." Emperor Akihito will abdicate from the Chrysanthemum Throne on April 30, making way for Crown Prince Naruhito to replace him the following day. The Emperor, who has embraced a more modern role as a symbol of the state, shocked the country in 2016 when he signalled his desire to step down, citing his age and health problems. AGENCY FRANCE-PRESSE

联合晚报
Lianhe Wanbao

玩美一族

善用发型产品
打造明星look

见晚报

STClassifieds

BUY IT • SELL IT • FIND IT

Private apartments wanted

See Class 526 of ST Classifieds

thenewpaper.

Hed Chef

Hedy Khoo whips up traditional meals in easy-to-follow recipes

The best ingredients
tnp.sg/lifestyle

THE STRAITS TIMES

Ng Yat Chung
SPH Chief Executive Officer

Anthony Tan
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Ignatius Low
Chief Marketing Officer

Glen Francis
Chief Technology Officer

Chua Wee Phong
Executive Vice-President (Circulation)

Warren Fernandez
Editor-in-Chief
(English/Malay/Tamil Media Group)
and The Straits Times Editor

Sumiko Tan
The Straits Times Executive Editor

Dominic Nathan
Managing Editor
(English/Malay/Tamil Media Group)

Helen Chia, Paul Jacob, Rahul Pathak,
Lim Chuan Huat, Ravi Velloor,
Vikram Khanna
Associate Editors

Paul Cheong
Night Editor

Ong Hwee Hwee
Digital Editor

Zakir Hussain
News Editor

Abdul Hafiz
Associate News Editor and Sunday Editor

Li Xueying
Enterprise Editor

Kor Kian Beng
Defence and Security Editor

Jeremy Au Yong
Foreign Editor

Susan Long
Lifestyle Editor

Lee Yulin
Sports Editor

Chua Mui Hoong, Audrey Quek
Opinion Editors

Peter Williams
Art Editor

Stephanie Yeow
Photo Editor

Mathew Pereira
Forum Editor

The Straits Times says

Flexibility needed at Hanoi summit

After months of making little headway following their first historic summit in Singapore last June, United States President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un meet again this week in Hanoi. Detractors have questioned whether there is justification for a second meeting so soon after the first, given the lack of progress in the denuclearisation process. Yet, it is because of the need to get things back on track that the two leaders are meeting again. They are hoping to put some momentum back into the process as both sides are frustrated at the impasse. The question is whether they can make a breakthrough and reach a deal that will move things forward.

That there is scepticism about what the second

summit can achieve is understandable as there is a huge gulf between the two sides as to what is meant by denuclearisation and how it is to be achieved. In Singapore, North Korea committed to “work towards complete denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula”. Its news agency KCNA, in an editorial last December, said this meant “removing all elements of nuclear threats from the areas of both the north and the south of Korea and also from surrounding areas from where the Korean peninsula is targeted”. Pyongyang wants the end of the US nuclear umbrella for South Korea and Japan, as well as dismantling of its own nuclear programme. It also wants incremental steps towards denuclearisation that are reciprocal

by the US, including some relief from sanctions and bilateral aid. The US, on the other hand, wants the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of North Korea before it will lift sanctions that are crippling the North’s economy. North Korea took some steps before and after the first summit, including destroying parts of the Punggye-ri nuclear test site, dismantling some facilities at a satellite launching station and repatriating remains of American soldiers killed in the Korean War. The US halted major military drills that Pyongyang saw as rehearsals for war against it. But the US would not budge on its stand on sanctions while the North continued with its nuclear and missile programmes although it has stopped

the tests. The nuclear deterrent is valued by the Kim regime as essential to its survival and the nuclear programme is its only bargaining chip that it would not give away so easily, experts have said. To break the impasse, neither side should go for broke and instead agree to take incremental, reciprocal steps. So, as suggested by some, North Korea could for a start allow international inspection of its nuclear and missile facilities in exchange for reciprocal measures from the US. To borrow a term from US envoy to North Korea Stephen Biegun, both sides should seek “concrete deliverables” that will move things in the right direction. The alternative would possibly be an escalation of tension as both sides lose patience.

GlobalAffairs

Facebook – facing the facts

The social media giant has continually dodged responsibility for its business practices. A British parliamentary probe shows why it needs to be reined in.



Jonathan Eyal
Global Affairs correspondent

Any doubts that the business practices of online social media and social networking companies such as Facebook require new and very stringent legal regulations were put to rest in a report just issued by a committee of the British Parliament.

The report documents in scathing, angry terms not only how Facebook’s business practices have “intentionally and knowingly” compromised users’ privacy in pursuit of financial gain, but also how the company’s platform is being used by certain hostile governments or their agents to undermine the political order, stability and safe conduct of elections in countries around the world.

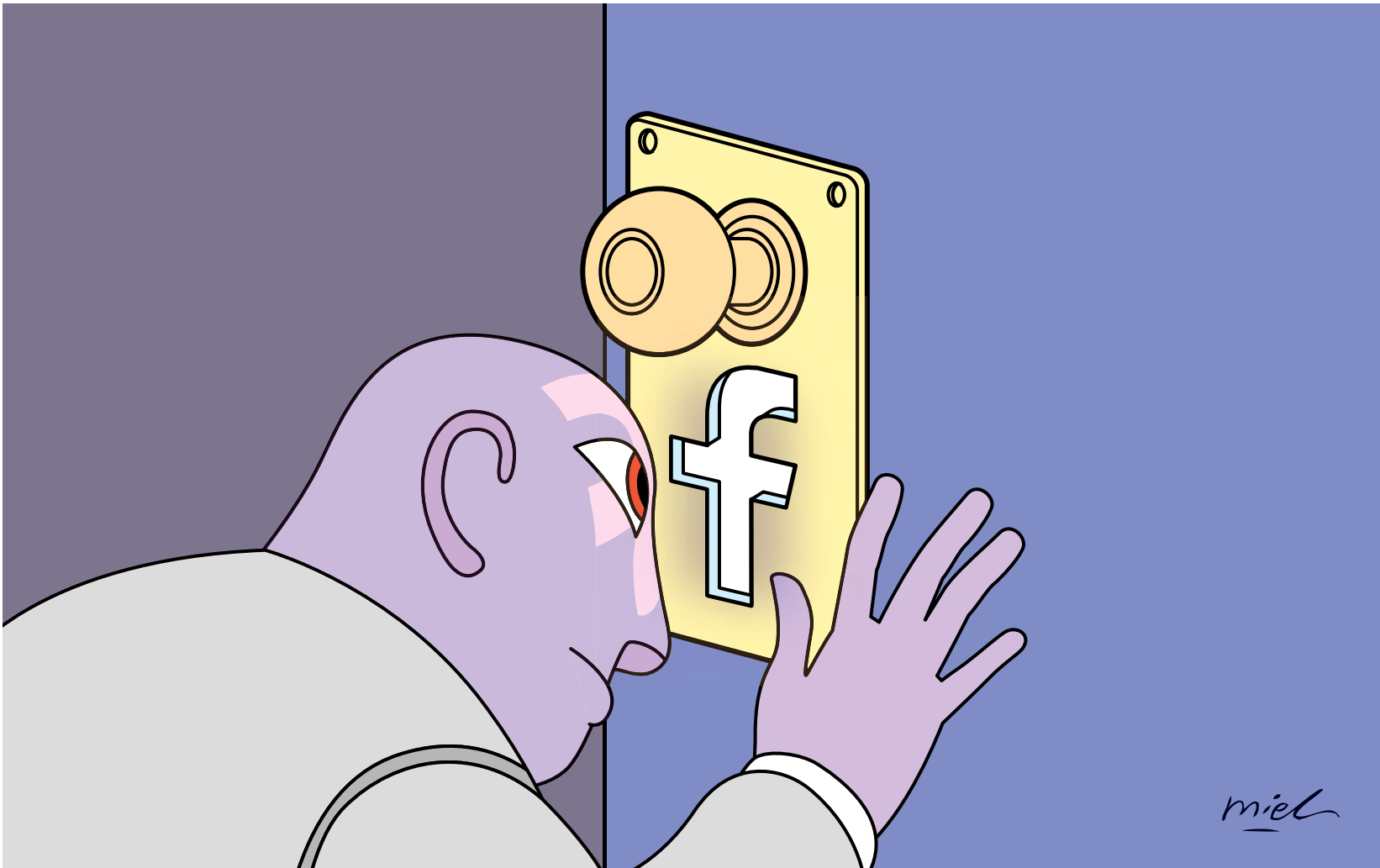
And if this was not grave enough, the British report accuses Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg of deliberately seeking to frustrate parliamentary investigations by offering incomplete, disingenuous and “at times misleading” evidence.

Predictably, Facebook rejected charges that it breached data protection laws, claiming that it has recently introduced changes to ensure political advertising on its platform is more transparent, so users can see who is putting out the information and for what purpose.

In an effort to deflect some of the political pressure, Mr Zuckerberg last Friday met Mr Jeremy Wright, Britain’s Culture Secretary, whose department is now drafting proposals for new legislation on online activities.

But the very fact that the British minister had to fly to Facebook’s global headquarters in San Francisco for the meeting – while the Facebook boss continues to reject requests to be questioned in person by lawmakers in some of the company’s key global markets – is an indication of just how impotent the legal regime is when it comes to social networking enterprises.

Still, the release of the British report does represent a historic turning point. The days when companies such as Facebook were



able to do more or less as they pleased are clearly drawing to an end.

BALANCE OF POWER

As the British parliamentarians put it, “we need a radical shift in the balance of power between the platforms and the people”. And not a moment too soon.

Established in the wake of allegations of interference in the 2016 US presidential election, as well as the 2016 British referendum to leave the European Union and the 2017 British general elections, the inquiry of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee of the British Parliament has made history in more ways than one.

The first innovation was in the make-up of the inquiry itself.

Mr Damian Collins, the Member of Parliament who chairs the committee, says: “We invited democratically elected representatives from eight countries to join our committee in the UK to create an ‘International Grand Committee’, the first of its kind, to promote further cross-border cooperation.”

The initiative was utterly inspired, not only because it allowed British lawmakers to take into account the concerns of legislators in other continents, but also because it emphasised the global nature of the task. As the committee put it, together with its foreign MPs, the inquiry included the elected representatives of almost half a billion people worldwide.

Singapore was the only Asian country invited to join, partly because it is a highly wired nation facing similar challenges and partly

because its parliamentary system is close to Britain’s, so its MPs needed no introduction on how to conduct effective inquiries.

But it was also because Singapore’s Parliament is actively grappling with similar problems. The three Singaporean MPs on the “International Grand Committee” – Mr Pritam Singh, Mr Edwin Tong and Ms Sun Xueling – were all members of Singapore’s own Select Committee on Deliberate Online Falsehoods.

The British parliamentary investigation also put forward a better definition of the problem. It urged governments not to use the term “fake news”, which may be a popular shorthand description but is increasingly abused – chiefly by people such as United States President Donald Trump – to describe any media network one does not like.

Instead, the committee suggested the term “disinformation”, to describe the “deliberate creation and sharing of false and/or manipulated information that is intended to deceive and mislead audiences, either for the purposes of causing harm, or for political, personal and financial gain”. It is a definition that is both more accurate and more likely to withstand the test of time.

But the biggest innovation was in the way the committee used its legal powers.

Mr Zuckerberg has refused three times to either give evidence or even respond to invitations, and the committee claims that this is part of a pattern adopted by Facebook in order to deflect such investigations.

In most such inquiries, Facebook sends representatives who, when faced with difficult questions, claim not to have the necessary details and promise to furnish answers in subsequent letters, but then invariably fail to provide all the required information.

“We are left in no doubt that this strategy was deliberate,” charges the British report.

Still, in a Hollywood-style movie drama that played out last November, the committee outmanoeuvred Facebook’s legal team by ordering American app developer Ted Kramer, who happened to be on a business trip in Britain, to appear before the committee. At the time, Mr Kramer’s company, Six4Three, was embroiled in a lawsuit with Facebook. The documents that he obtained during his legal challenge, which were not legally disclosable in the US, unmasked the way Facebook really operates.

The documents showed that although Facebook had claimed its new policy was intended to protect users’ privacy, it continued to allow other commercial companies to harvest its data, as long as they spent at least US\$250,000 (\$\$337,800) a year in advertising on the platform or if they had something else of value to trade in exchange, such as a brand name.

“The idea of linking access to friends’ data to the financial value of the developers’ relationship with Facebook was a recurring feature of the documents,” the report says.

The British report also reveals that Facebook executives lured Android phone users into handing over their text messages and call

logs merely by accepting a software upgrade, even though Facebook’s own managers had warned in an internal company e-mail that this strategy was “a pretty high-risk thing to do from a PR perspective”.

Facebook also introduced software touted as preventing users’ browsing history from being tracked, but which was actually tracking their Web activities even more intimately.

POLITICAL WEAPONS

As the committee’s report indicates, these are not just abhorrent and perhaps some even illegal actions. They also inflict deep damage on nations’ political systems.

Negative media stories are prioritised by algorithms, since they are more frequently shared than positive stories. This is an open invitation to every political crackpot or conspiracy theory. “Deep fakes” such as doctored videos of politicians claiming to say things they have never said already proliferate.

Cambridge Analytica – which had purchased the data of 87 million Facebook profiles from a third-party app developer to use on behalf of, among others, the Trump presidential campaign – was enabled by Facebook, which had both supplied the data and acted as the platform for Cambridge Analytica’s “targeted messaging” to voters.

Facebook, along with Twitter and Instagram, was exploited for similar work by the so-called Russian Internet Research Agency to influence politics in other countries.

And, as the British report indicates, Facebook was also used

to surreptitiously influence the outcome of the 2016 referendum in which British voters decided, by a very narrow majority, to leave the EU.

The commission believes a hitherto unknown Canadian company called AggregateIQ harvested Facebook users’ profiles and linked them to voter files in order to “precisely target” them with messages supporting Brexit, as Britain’s separation from the EU is popularly called.

And last year, an anonymous, “highly misleading” pro-Brexit website called Mainstream Network “spent an estimated £257,000 (\$\$453,300) on Facebook ads that reached nearly 11 million users”, claims the committee.

In a rare appearance before the US Congress last April – an event in which everything was stage-managed, including the cushion on the chair on which Mr Zuckerberg sat so that he would appear taller than he is – Facebook’s CEO claimed that users, the “virtual you” owned “all the content” of his company.

Yet as the British report argues, all the advertising Facebook sells and all the information it exploits are not accessible to users. The “virtual you” is a conceit, an invention.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

The British committee’s report tears to pieces the arguments companies such as Facebook usually deploy, that they are mere “platforms” and have no responsibility for the content they carry. They do, and they should be made legally liable.

The committee argues for the creation of a new regulator for social media sites, a compulsory code of conduct and a legal obligation for social platforms such as Facebook to take down “harmful content” or face compulsory fines.

The British government is still hesitant about following the committee’s recommendations; it is worried about losing Facebook’s financial commitment to the UK. The Singapore authorities may also have the same reservations, given Facebook’s decision to invest in a Singapore-based data centre.

Still, more rather than less regulation is in the offing. The days of fat profits and little accountability are drawing to an end.

And that much is perhaps also known to some of those who may have used social platforms to influence elections in the past.

Traditionally, around 80 per cent of people accessing British parliamentary reports online are based in Britain.

But two-thirds of those following the current activities of the disinformation inquiry are coming from overseas, with the biggest chunk based in Russia.

Someone is evidently very interested in this debate. And probably in order to plot the next move.

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at the launch of the National Anti-Corruption Plan 2019-2023 in Putrajaya on Jan 29. Mr Anwar is to take over from Dr Mahathir in about two years, according to a deal struck within the Pakatan Harapan alliance. Mr Anwar understands all too well the Prime Minister's powers of incumbency, says the writer, adding that he tasted the full blast of it in 1998 and has no wish to face it again. PHOTO: BERNAMA



Who will blink first – Anwar or Mahathir?

Joceline Tan

When Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim arrived at Universiti Selangor (Unisel) to give a talk last week, he was introduced as the “eighth prime minister of Malaysia”. There was deafening applause from the floor. The man making the introduction was Unisel vice-chancellor Mohammad Redzuan Othman, who has been devoted to Mr Anwar since their undergraduate years in Universiti Malaya. Mr Anwar basked in the adulation. But it was a different story a day later when he was informed of several banners that had appeared overnight in the city, lauding him as the eighth prime minister while asking Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to step down. He immediately asked his party officials to remove the banners. Just as Dr Mahathir is finding it

tough to be prime minister the second time around, Mr Anwar is finding it to be a case of “so close yet so far away”. He is surely aware of the joke that he might be “PM-in-waiting forever”. Moreover, all eyes tend to turn on him each time there are allegations of a plot against Dr Mahathir. That was what happened when news of a potential vote of no confidence in Parliament started making the rounds. Around the same time, a list of MPs said to have pledged their allegiance to Mr Anwar went viral. There were 101 names on the list, which suggests that he is only 12 names short of a simple majority in Parliament. However, it was hard to take the list seriously because it included some Umno MPs who had jumped to Bersatu, Dr Mahathir’s party. **SUCCESSION AGREEMENT** “There are people coming to see Anwar, to pledge allegiance, to ask

him to do something. But he is not entertaining what they say. My boss will wait. He intends to hold on to his end of the (succession) agreement, and he believes that Dr Mahathir will keep his word,” said Mr Farhash Wafa Salvador, Perak’s Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) chief and a close aide of Mr Anwar. As Mr Farhash pointed out, it was not a personal agreement but one made between Dr Mahathir and Pakatan Harapan. Of course, Mr Anwar gets wind of what the Bersatu leaders think of him and is also aware of attempts to block his ascent. But he now seems more mellowed, patient and rather sanguine about life and politics. “He does not want to get distracted by the political noise that goes on between him and Dr Mahathir,” said Mr Farhash. Visitors to Mr Anwar’s Jalan Gasing office say he is relaxed and wants to go with the flow. He is very active on Twitter, especially on national policies,

BIDING HIS TIME

There are people coming to see Anwar, to pledge allegiance, to ask him to do something. But he is not entertaining what they say. My boss will wait. He intends to hold on to his end of the (succession) agreement, and he believes that Dr Mahathir will keep his word.



MR FARHASH Wafa Salvador, Perak’s PKR chief and a close aide of Mr Anwar.

although it must be quite a struggle to ignore the provocative tweets of his estranged deputy president, Datuk Seri Azmin Ali. Relations between him and Mr Azmin have broken down irrevocably although both of them held hands and smiled for the camera when Mr Anwar visited Mr Azmin after the latter’s surgery. Some have described the occasion as an Oscar-worthy moment.

THE LONG GAME

There were calls at the Bersatu annual general meeting for Dr Mahathir to serve a full term, which Mr Anwar chose to ignore. Mr Anwar is playing the long game. He can afford to wait or, to put it delicately, he is 71 and Dr Mahathir is 93. Most of all, Mr Anwar understands all too well the Prime Minister’s powers of incumbency. He tasted the full blast of it in 1998 and has no wish to experience it again. To be fair to Mr Anwar, talk of a potential vote of no confidence actually started after Dr Mahathir began recruiting former Umno MPs. Speculation reached a crescendo after he struck an understanding of support with Parti Islam SeMalaysia leaders. It is understood that Dr Mahathir has also been meeting individual MPs to sniff out where they stand, and at least two Amanah leaders are believed to support him. When the Prime Minister made an official visit to the Defence Ministry last Friday, the perception was that Defence Minister

Mohamad Sabu was one of them. As everyone knows, all prime ministers want a strong hold on the Defence and Home ministries. Despite denials of a showdown in Parliament, the session next month will be closely watched. Any attempt to move a vote of no confidence has to be done with all the numbers in hand. Otherwise, it will be an instantaneous death by numbers for the person behind it.

CABINET RESHUFFLE

If the session passes without drama, the next potential flashpoint is the Cabinet reshuffle that is expected to take place some time in May. A reshuffle after only one year is actually too soon for any government. But it has become a necessity for Dr Mahathir, given the host of complaints about some of his ministers and deputy ministers. The complaints range from sheer incompetence to their inability to speak decent Bahasa Malaysia. Even Tun Daim Zainuddin, the man widely perceived as the power behind the scenes, said in an interview with Sin Chew Daily that some of the ministers are “L licence drivers” whereas Dr Mahathir is used to the F1 circuit. Dr Mahathir’s recruitment of former Umno MPs is not only about the numbers game, but also to give him more choice in the event of a Cabinet reshuffle. He needs experienced hands, like Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed, to connect with the Malay base and deal with the civil service. It is no secret that some Pakatan government figures have encountered problems with the civil service. There is still some distrust and these leaders are paying the price for bad-mouthing everything to do with the government during their years in the opposition.

THE MAN TO WATCH

The impending reshuffle will happen at the midpoint of Dr Mahathir’s two-year tenure. There is therefore an expectation that the reshuffle will pave the way for a succession Cabinet. But strangely enough, no one is expecting Mr Anwar to replace Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail as the No. 2. Instead, the gossip is that Dr Mahathir is eyeing Mr Azmin for the No. 2 job or even as the second deputy prime minister. That would be controversial and could spark a showdown. “Why should Mahathir rock the boat with something like that? He is the captain, he wants the ship to sail on. Rock the boat and the captain may sink with the boat,” said Mr Minaq Jinggo, a photojournalist and long-time admirer of Dr Mahathir. By the time Dr Mahathir is ready to reshuffle his Cabinet, his party should have at least 27 MPs, thanks to the crossovers. It will strengthen his hand to do what is needed. But the man to watch in the coming months is Mr Azmin. If Dr Mahathir is Mr Anwar’s biggest threat, then Mr Azmin is his second-biggest one. The Economic Affairs Minister is poised for bigger things on account of his experience, age and personality. The three of them will be the key players in the coming months. THE STAR/ASIA NEWS NETWORK

Stop counting women

In the quest for women’s rights, a fixation on numerical goals can lead to a false sense of clarity and certainty.

Katherine Mangu-Ward

I recently joined the board of a small non-profit organisation. I can’t say for sure that my ovaries got me the gig, but I think they were at least part of my appeal. That uncertainty isn’t pleasant, but it’s less unpleasant than not being invited to join the board at all. For many professional women, doing gender-balance maths is a tic, a reflexive response to being in too many rooms with too few other women. That reflex was on display last month, when the announcement of Oscar nominations set off the annual ritual of counting up female nominees and then lamenting the ways in which women have been

slighted. In recent years, the Hollywood commentariat has institutionalised my counting reflex. In a typical example of the genre, The Atlantic declared “female film-makers were entirely neglected”. Bustle told its readers, “don’t celebrate too much” over women’s success in the documentary category, but focus instead on how their numbers in the directing and cinematography categories were shockingly low. At the Golden Globes, even as she clutched her best supporting actress trophy, Regina King scolded Hollywood for not doing better and vowed “to make sure that everything I produce” is going to be “50 per cent women”. Women are, of course, more than capable of producing Oscar-worthy insights. However, the notion that the lack of perfectly equal representation is obvious evidence of injustice is wrong-headed and counterproductive. I understand why people want to keep tallies. While some gender imbalances can be explained by individual or group preferences, the shortage of women in so many areas of public life has been allowed or ignored or tacitly excused for so long that it may take hard numbers to open people’s eyes. And there’s something seductive

about counting. We count sheep to fall asleep. We celebrate anniversaries and birthdays. We track stock prices. We log miles run and dollars spent. To count something is to see it, to understand it, to have the illusion of control over it. But people who want to lose weight initially learn to count calories in order to recalibrate their perceptions about how to make healthy choices. The goal isn’t a lifetime of squinting at labels. The goal is to develop a new set of habits and instincts, to make good decisions that feel natural and unforced. An occasional audit is vital, but continuous mortification can be crippling and wasteful. People who routinely go on about their diet rules – or worse, freely share their thoughts about co-workers’ lunch orders – are more likely to provoke resentment than to convert the reluctant. In the same way, the real work of recalibrating representation must be done privately and incrementally, one day at a time. Keeping those running tallies of gender imbalance is exhausting and distracts from more substantive work. It can also be difficult to see the forest when you’re busy counting the trees. Not every cracked glass ceiling is a victory. Recently, major newspapers trumpeted the fact

that women hold all of the highest positions at the Central Intelligence Agency. The chief executives of four of the nation’s five biggest military contractors are now women; Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics and the defence arm of Boeing all have #ladybosses. It’s hard to imagine our feminist forebears seeing female dominance of the military-industrial complex as an unmixed blessing. I’m a magazine editor, and when I have a story to assign, I shuffle writers’ names around in a mental matrix of who is expert enough, dependable enough and affordable enough to get the job done. Gender is a consideration. It’s not the primary one. In journalism, and in moviemaking, it’s natural to think about how to serve and expand your audience. Those who argue for diversity among our storytellers make the case that doing so ensures we capture a truer, fuller portrait of reality – which is fair enough. But consider Roma. If there is any justice in this world, it will win the Academy Award for best director. This wrenching, beautiful film is set almost entirely in the world of women; it delicately engages class and race, stares unflinchingly at the darkness and light of motherhood, and yet it shows up on the wrong side of the gender ledgers: The director is Alfonso Cuarón, a man. Precise numerical goals create a false sense of clarity and certainty. The absolute best way to ruin the gradual organic process of moving towards a society where men and

women can both pursue the work they want – safely, with fair salaries and equal opportunities for promotion – is to freeze and polarise the conversation by imposing a bunch of rigid laws and policies. California passed a Bill last autumn that mandates the presence of at least one woman on the board of any publicly traded company headquartered there, with increases in that number under certain conditions. “We are tired of being nice. We’re tired of being polite. We are going to require this because it’s going to benefit the economy,” said a co-author of the legislation, state Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson. This line of argumentation is typical, and baffling. Could it really be true that increasing female board representation is irrefutably good for business, yet won’t happen unless companies are forced to do it right now? In Norway, where a requirement for 40 per cent female board membership became law in 2008, there’s some evidence that strict quotas may be counterproductive. Fewer companies chose to undertake initial public offerings in the period after the policy took effect, and there was no measurable change in the affected companies’ performance or improvement in the prospects for women lower on the corporate hierarchy. In Kenya, lawmakers are debating a Bill to enforce the so-called Two-Thirds Gender Rule, a constitutional clause prohibiting more than 66 per cent of the

legislature to be the same gender. In the case of any kind of quota, there are obvious trade-offs between one category (gender) and others (race, sexual orientation, disability status among them) that arguably deserve more consideration. As usual, the law is a lagging indicator. Gender is easier to notice and tally in ways that other statuses aren’t. In a perfect world, there would never be a roomful of white men deciding whether to pick a woman instead of a person of colour for a “diversity slot”. Being a token woman or winning the women’s trophy is better than nothing. But it’s also reductive and demeaning. The unease over this was reflected in the mockery US presidential candidate Mitt Romney got for his remarks on “binders full of women”. The courts grappled with the problems of quotas during the college admissions affirmative action wars of the 1990s. They settled on a compromise that does a shockingly good job of mirroring the way people actually function when left to their own devices. Hard quotas aren’t permitted, but giving some consideration to balance and diversity is fine. On Oscar night this year, I will wince when only men are the nominees in some ostensibly co-ed categories. But I’m going to try my best to celebrate victories for women when they come and leave the counting to PricewaterhouseCoopers. NYTIMES

• Katherine Mangu-Ward is the editor-in-chief of Reason magazine.

Japan and Asean: Partners for uncertain times

Heng Yee Kuang and Jonathan McClory

For The Straits Times

If confirmation was still needed of the unstable and dangerous times in which we live, then the annual gathering this month of the world's foreign policy elite at the Munich Security Conference provided it. Divisions and tensions were laid bare during fraught discussions while the conference report itself posed the stark question, unimaginable just a few years ago, of "Who will pick up the pieces of the international order?"

The principles of multilateralism and the international rules-based order that have underpinned security and economic development are under serious threat.

The challenge now for all countries is how to respond. Japan, like Singapore, has made its choice.

It has shown, in actions and words, that it believes the correct response of open, free-trading nations is not a retreat from cooperation but to work more closely than ever with partners.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe demonstrated this belief by salvaging the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal in the wake of the withdrawal by the United States. He said Japan would be a "champion upholding open systems" as the "flag-bearers of free trade". The priority he has given to strengthening Japan's relationship with Asean also demonstrates a commitment to regional cooperation and to enhance one of the key pillars on which the region's remarkable progress rests.

Indeed, Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) strategic framework is underpinned by its

commitment to the rule of international law, free trade, open seas, and the benefits of a market economy that have powered the development of Asean states. Adherence to these principles is broadly shared by Japan, Singapore and Asean.

CONNECTING THROUGH QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Japan has brought these principles to life by working with Asean partners over decades to improve regional connectivity – so critical to trade, employment and opportunity.

Japanese investment and aid have helped develop ports, railways, roads and airports throughout South-east Asia.

The Japan-Mekong Connectivity Initiative hopes to cut travel time along the East-West Economic Corridor from three weeks to three days. Japan is also working to improve maritime infrastructure

with port construction projects completed or under way in Cambodia, Indonesia and Vietnam.

Japanese investments in infrastructure across Asean states have already totalled more than US\$230 billion (S\$311 billion) since 2000, according to BMI Research.

In making these investments, a major emphasis is placed on the transparency and sustainability – both environmental and financial – of the financing deals to ensure real and lasting benefits to the communities and countries involved. Tokyo brands these efforts as "partnership for quality infrastructure".

Through its trilateral partnership with Australia and the United States, Japan is also working with partners farther afield to help provide additional funds for transformational infrastructure projects in South-east Asia.

Following Mr Abe's summit last year with Chinese President Xi Jinping, there is even talk of collaboration between Japan and China on a high-speed rail project to link Thailand's three largest airports.

Japan's FOIP and China's Belt and Road Initiative need not necessarily compete with each other.

MARITIME SECURITY

But while infrastructure is critical, the prosperity of the region – particularly so for maritime trading nations such as Singapore and Japan – still rests on the ability to transport raw materials and goods unfettered across our oceans, seas and waterways.

Deploying its soft power, Japan has stepped up diplomatic efforts

to support international rules and norms that protect freedom of navigation for shipping. Through cooperative capacity-building and the provision of ships and aircraft to South-east Asian partners, Japan is increasing their capability to maintain collective maritime security.

On the hard power side, recent joint exercises and goodwill visits – including sending Japan's largest naval vessel, the helicopter carrier JS Kaga, to Singapore – have signalled the country's commitment to keeping Asian sea lanes open.

Japan's growing global soft power is helping to draw positive contributions from partners outside the region too.

British Prime Minister Theresa May has called Japan London's closest security partner in Asia, and British naval warships and fighter jets have recently conducted joint exercises with their Japanese counterparts.

Indeed, Japan's ability to bring other friendly global players into the region for the benefit of Asean member states should not be underestimated.

This is reflected in the most recent Soft Power 30 report, an annual study launched in 2015 by Portland Communications that ranks countries by their soft power assets, which saw Japan climb into the top five for the first time.

SOFT POWER RANKING

The Soft Power 30 ranking combines objective metrics with international polling data in assessing a country's reputation relative to others on its list. Countries are evaluated objectively

and subjectively on criteria including culture, education, innovation, and positive global contribution.

In the most recent Soft Power 30, published last July, China placed 27th, while the US placed fourth. With South Korea and Singapore placed 20th and 21st respectively, Japan is the highest-ranking Asian country. Thirteen other Asian states are included in the study's long-list of 60 countries in total – only the top 30 countries are ranked in the report.

What really sets Japan apart from other major Indo-Pacific powers, according to the study's polling data, is the extent to which Japan is trusted to "do the right thing in global affairs". This is according to nationally representative samples of the public, polled across 25 different countries covering every region of the world – 11,000 people in total.

This trust is critically important, and in its cooperation with partners, Japan is demonstrating how hard and soft power can be deployed to meet the challenges underlined by this year's Munich Security Conference.

So long as the Japan-Asean partnership holds fast, we shouldn't have to worry about picking up the pieces of the regional order just yet.

stopinion@sph.com.sg

• Heng Yee Kuang is a professor at the Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Tokyo, while Jonathan McClory is general manager for Asia at Portland Communications and author of The Soft Power 30.

All the president's pronouns

A study of United States leaders' language use reveals what makes a successful politician

Faye Flam

By some scientific measures, Mr Donald Trump's presidency is not an aberration but part of a long-running trend. In his use of language, he is off the charts in his absence of analytical statements, as well as his expressions of confidence.

Both of those tendencies are correlated with success in politics.

A trend towards less analysis and more confidence has been going on for a century, according to researchers who are using a technique created a few years ago by psychologist James Pennebaker at the University of Texas.

He created a program that analyses large bodies of text and counts the different kinds of connector words – pronouns, prepositions, articles and auxiliary verbs (like "is", "have", "does").

Dr Pennebaker and his colleagues found they could draw inferences from the way people used those words – about whether they were likely to succeed in school, and whether they were of higher or lower status than those they were addressing.

People with a lot of confidence assume higher status in their expressions – mainly in their use of pronouns. Confident people favour "we" and "you" while the meeker tend to use "I".

We are more likely to follow someone who says "We should go this way" than one who says "I think this might be a good way to go", Dr Pennebaker said – and that's true whether or not anyone has any idea which way we should go.

We are, he said, suckers for people who sound confident. And we are also suckers, he added, for simple, storytelling language over analytical language.

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

People want to hear about policy, but we gravitate towards simple solutions, preferably with slogans.

Psychologists and linguists became intrigued with Mr Trump's elocution from the time he started to rise to prominence in the 2016 primary debates. His lack of analytical language was striking; he never used "if-then" statements, said Dr Pennebaker, who learnt to measure analytical language by studying college admissions essays of students at the University of Texas.

There is a kind of spectrum of language use, he said.

The more often people use articles and prepositions, the less they use pronouns and auxiliary verbs. The students who favoured articles and prepositions did better in college, he added, because these



Then US President Barack Obama and then President-elect Donald Trump speaking to the media in 2016. Mr Obama's language was very low in analytical content and he used simplicity to inspire people, says the writer, adding that Mr Trump employs a different style, with phrases that stick in the mind – from "lock her up" to "build the wall". PHOTO: WASHINGTON POST

demonstrate analytical thinking.

The more analytical essays sounded more formal, he said, with a student saying things like: "After careful comparison, I've found five reasons to choose the University of Texas."

The less analytical essays were more personal: "Ever since I was six years old, I knew I wanted to be a psychologist."

Lack of analytical language doesn't necessarily signal low intelligence, said Dr Pennebaker. Listeners and readers relate to simple language; good writers and orators give people what they like.

In almost every presidential election since 1980, when debate transcripts were first available), the candidate with less analytical speech and writing won – with the exception of Mr Bill Clinton, who was more analytical than his rivals.

The researchers identified confident language patterns with a series of experiments using real e-mails that subjects sent to people they considered higher, lower or similar in status to themselves, as well as experiments in which people were designated as leaders or followers.

Former president Barack Obama was often criticised for using the

word "I" too often, Dr Pennebaker said, though he used it less than his predecessors and Mr Trump. Pundits critical of Mr Obama assumed the use of the first person revealed a self-centred attitude, but that isn't necessarily the case. A statement like "I feel there might be a problem with our relationship" shows an understanding that there are other perspectives and that we are each privy to only our own. I might see a problem with our relationship, while you might think our relationship is fine, or perhaps you didn't realise we were in a relationship at all.

Then there are what Dr Pennebaker calls "sledgehammer" verbs – "I changed", "I blocked", "I won". When Mr Obama used these, he said, "it felt like a slap in the face". But the program showed that Mr Obama was a relatively light user of "I" and a much heavier user of the confidence-projecting "you" and "we".

When the researchers looked back into the long history of presidential writings, press conferences, debates and speeches, the result, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, showed a

word "I" too often, Dr Pennebaker said, though he used it less than his predecessors and Mr Trump. Pundits critical of Mr Obama assumed the use of the first person revealed a self-centred attitude, but that isn't necessarily the case. A statement like "I feel there might be a problem with our relationship" shows an understanding that there are other perspectives and that we are each privy to only our own. I might see a problem with our relationship, while you might think our relationship is fine, or perhaps you didn't realise we were in a relationship at all.

Then there are what Dr Pennebaker calls "sledgehammer" verbs – "I changed", "I blocked", "I won". When Mr Obama used these, he said, "it felt like a slap in the face". But the program showed that Mr Obama was a relatively light user of "I" and a much heavier user of the confidence-projecting "you" and "we".

When the researchers looked back into the long history of presidential writings, press conferences, debates and speeches, the result, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, showed a

steady decrease in analytical language, starting in the era of Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson.

Mr Obama is no exception to the trend. His language was very low in analytical content. He used simplicity to inspire people to think we can make headway against complex problems like race relations and access to healthcare.

Mr Trump takes the trend a step further and employs a different style, with phrases that stick in the mind – from "lock her up" to "build the wall".

Is this some sort of slide into idiocracy? It probably reflects changes in technology, with radio and then television and later social media reshaping the way candidates speak to the public, as well as shifting the kinds of people most likely to win elections.

The good news: It may not be possible to get any less analytical or more confident than Mr Trump. The trend could have run its course.

BLOOMBERG

• Faye Flam, a Bloomberg Opinion columnist, has written for The Economist, The New York Times, The Washington Post, Psychology Today, Science and other publications.

BIG PICTURE



WEATHER

Windy, with passing showers in the afternoon.
High 34 deg C Low 24 deg C
24-hr PSI as of 5pm yesterday: 41 to 55 (Moderate)



PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Keeping the bull at bay with numbers

Bullfighters engaged in the “Capeia Arraiana” – an entertainment in Portugal that attracts tourists from all over the world – at the Campo Pequeno arena in Lisbon on Saturday.

The Capeia Arraiana is a type of

bullfight that originated in the villages of the upper Coa valley in north Portugal, close to the border with Spain. During the contest, the bullfighters use the forcão – a massive wooden fork built with tree

logs and handled by 20 or more men. Each person has a specific role within the structure: some support the weight while others manoeuvre it towards the bull, and there is someone giving directions. Unlike in Spain, where classical bullfighting was born in the 18th

century and the death of the animal is the essential climax in the contest, killing a bull in the ring is deemed by some in Portugal to be tantamount to murder and was outlawed in 1928 across the country, according to The New York Times.



**NANYANG
TECHNOLOGICAL
UNIVERSITY**
SINGAPORE



School of Social Sciences

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN APPLIED GERONTOLOGY

an interdisciplinary, Asia-focused programme

Young and research-intensive, Nanyang Technological University (NTU Singapore) is ranked 12th globally. It is also placed 1st among the world's best young universities. The College of Humanities, Arts, and, Social Sciences believes strongly in interdisciplinary learning. Robust disciplinary training is important, but crossing disciplinary boundaries helps broaden one's intellectual horizon and often results in breakthroughs and innovation.

The Master of Science in Applied Gerontology is a holistic programme designed to provide you with in-depth knowledge, skills and experience to work with older people, develop leadership, design policies, and innovate and enhance care services for an ageing population.

Our programme is truly interdisciplinary with courses taught by faculty from medicine, social sciences, communication, business, engineering, arts and humanities, and biological sciences.

Programme features:

- Two concentrations: Leadership and Policy Engagement; Clinical Practice and Care Management
- Innovative courses with an Asian focus
- Draws on NTU's thriving ageing research community and centres
- Experiential learning through site visits, projects and practicum
- Leverage perspectives, experience and network of diverse cohort of students
- Strong engagement with external academic, clinical, social service and community partners
- Flexible and caters to the needs of working professionals - study full-time (12 months) or part-time (minimum of 18 months)

Join us for
an information and
sharing session to
learn more about
the programme
and hear from
our students.

Date:
2 March 2019,
Saturday

Time:
10:30am - 12:00pm

Venue:
The Hive
Level B3, TR+20
Nanyang
Technological
University
52 Nanyang Avenue
Singapore 639816

Register now on our
website or email us.

Application closes on 15 March 2019

Contact Information
MSc in Applied Gerontology, School of Social Sciences
Email: gerontology@ntu.edu.sg
Tel: +65 6904 7499 / +65 6592 7833
www.gerontology.sss.ntu.edu.sg

NTUsg     

More screen time than a working week?

8-12-year-olds spend an average of 42 hours per week using devices. Too much screen exposure during this vital time of growth can cause life-long damage to a child's eyesight.

Protect your child's eyesight by helping them **#SeePastTheScreen** with better device habits.

seepastthescreen.sg

Supported by:



National Myopia
Prevention Programme
Keep Myopia Away, Go Outdoors and Play!



B| HOME



GEORGE THEN
DIABETIC'S HEALTH IMPROVES
UNDER TEAMLET CARE B2

E-commerce boom reshaping delivery sector in Singapore

Players look to collaboration amid intense competition for resources, massive volumes and fragmented market

Tiffany Fumiko Tay

Missed deliveries, lost packages and delayed shipments are the bane of every online shopper.

And these problems – which had surfaced during the just-concluded seasonal peak – could well increase if steps are not quickly taken, warn logistics players.

One measure already in the pipeline is a partnership between SingPost and some of its competitors to offer customers the option of receiving purchases through any delivery node in the network. Called The Last Mile Platform, it will be rolled out next month.

Such alliances may be unusual. But it cannot be business as usual.

SingPost saw its postal system strain under the pressure of the recent peak season. It saw volumes surge by 30 per cent, double what it expected. On average, it already delivers about three million items a day.

And this volume of deliveries, predicts SingPost group chief executive Paul Coutts, will become the new normal in six months.

Until very recently, e-commerce penetration in Singapore had “actually been quite low”, Mr Coutts told The Straits Times in a recent interview.

“But I really believe that it’s now accelerating and taking off.”

According to a 2018 study by Google and Temasek, Singapore’s e-commerce market, which stood at US\$1.8 billion (\$2.43 billion) last year, is predicted to grow to US\$5 billion by 2025.

Nanyang Business School adjunct associate professor Zafar Momin said that with just 5 to 6 per cent of shopping transacted online in Singapore, e-commerce penetration here may appear relatively low compared with countries like China (20 per cent) and Britain (16 per cent).

While there will always be demand for doorstep deliveries as a premium service, he said the future blueprint for last-mile delivery in Singapore will likely be a hybrid model that includes lockers and community-based deliveries.

Singapore’s e-commerce sector is, however, expected to show double-digit growth over the coming years, he said.

Lazada, one of the region’s biggest e-commerce players, said that sales for the Singles’ Day event last year were three times that of the year before. Its chief executive in Singapore James Chang said it had seen a 60 per cent increase in smaller local businesses joining as sellers in recent months, helping to drive the industry’s “tremendous growth”.

Mr Prashant Dadlani, chief executive of retail logistics start-up blu, noted that rapid growth is not necessarily sustainable, adding that e-commerce now “is fuelled heavily by promotions, price discounting and cross-subsidising”.

Mr Erik Cheong, co-founder of Park N Parcel, which has 1,600 collection points, is even more blunt.

In the overcrowded market, he said, “many third-party logistics providers are offering services at a low rate with thin margins or even making a loss per delivery”.

There are now dozens of operators offering thousands of collection points across the island. But the market is fragmented and messy, while intense competition for resources calls for more industry collaboration, players said.

Parcel Santa, which provides parcel locker services to 300 condominiums in Singapore, started in 2017. Co-founder Jim Huang said that while traditional retail relies on malls and shops as consolidation points for goods, online shopping sees the delivery of goods to individual doorsteps, which is unsustainable.

The only way for logistics to keep pace with e-commerce growth is to re-establish “consolidation points” such as parcel lockers, he said.

While there will always be demand for doorstep deliveries as a premium service, he said the future blueprint for last-mile delivery in Singapore will likely be a hybrid model that includes lockers and community-based deliveries.

Courier services are also finding ways to beat the manpower crunch and reduce missed deliveries.

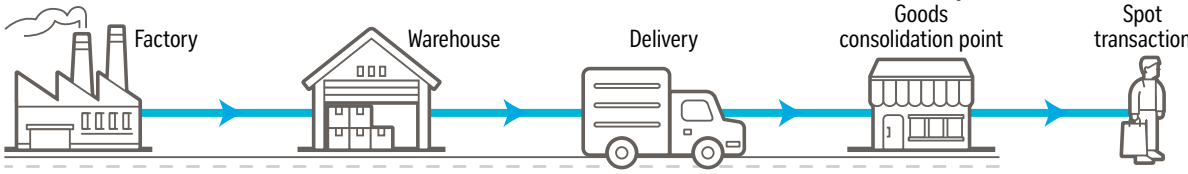
Ninja Van, for example, has a network of about 1,000 pick-up and drop-off points, including neighbourhood shops, in addition to

The decentralisation of shopping

The recent holiday peak season saw e-commerce volumes increase by 30 per cent for SingPost, a level it expects to be the norm in six months. This follows a similar trend across South-east Asia as more people turn to shopping online. The Straits Times looks at how last-mile delivery is evolving to meet demand.

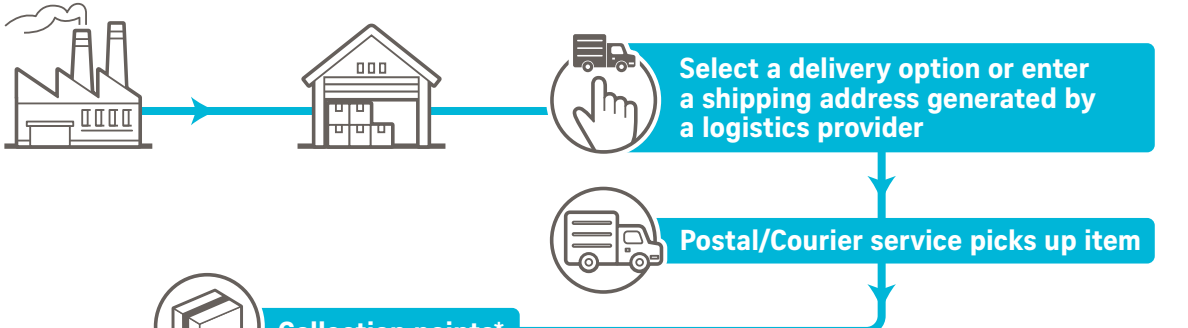
BEFORE E-COMMERCE

Goods flow to mall/shop



AFTER E-COMMERCE

Goods flow directly to consumer



Have parcel delivered to a nearby home or store and pick it up later



7-Eleven
350 outlets

Ninja Van network
1,000 pick-up and drop-off points, including SPH Buzz convenience stores

Smart parcel lockers – partner couriers deliver to locker stations for self-collection



SingPost's POPStation lockers
160 locations including community centres and malls

bluPort
More than 120 locations, including Cheers convenience stores and petrol stations



Parcel Santa
At 300 selected condominiums

Locker Alliance
70 locker sites at HDB blocks and MRT stations under a Government pilot project

Doorstep and letter-box deliveries

Postmen have to make between 20 and 60 doorstep deliveries daily, on top of delivering 3,000 mail items

NOTE: *Not an exhaustive list

Sources: PARCEL SANTA, SINGPOST, GOOGLE, TEMASEK HOLDINGS, NINJA VAN, PARK N PARCEL, 7-ELEVEN, BLU, IMDA
PHOTOS: ST FILE, STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

offering doorstep deliveries.

On-demand delivery platforms like GoGoVan, which has a registered fleet of 20,000 in Singapore, and GrabExpress, which rolled out its beta trial here last year, rely on shared resources.

GrabExpress uses GrabFood’s motorcycle fleet, allowing the riders to “reduce idle time and earn more income”, a spokesman said.

Some operators feel there should be greater collaboration in the industry, especially during peak seasons.

The Last Mile Platform, as well as the Locker Alliance, are leading the charge to create a more cohesive

delivery network for consumers in a highly competitive space, where some players are at risk of suffering losses.

SingPost’s Last Mile Platform will integrate partner courier services, parcel lockers and collection points in all South-east Asian countries, and allow retailers to offer customers the option of receiving purchases through any delivery node in the network.

The Locker Alliance is a government initiative to break down the barrier of locker operators having separate computer systems and tie-ups.

A year-long pilot was rolled out in December which lets customers of online retailers such as Lazada and Qoo10 have their items delivered to any of the 62 locker sites at Housing Board blocks in Punggol and Bukit Panjang, as well as at eight MRT stations.

Mr Christopher Ong, managing director of DHL Express Singapore, which is part of the pilot, said that rolling it out across the island will “give customers more options as well as a more consistent user experience”.

tiffanyt@sph.com.sg

Animal cruelty: Over 400 reports made last year

Fabian Koh

There were over 400 reports of animal cruelty made last year, but 90 per cent were later established to involve “non-cruelty”.

Among them was an incident in Yishun last November, when a cat was found dead with a puncture wound on its left hind leg. The authorities later learnt that it had been attacked by stray dogs.

“The increase in the number of alleged cruelty cases reported could be attributed to greater awareness of animal welfare, as well as an increased willingness to report and provide useful information for our investigation,” said an Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) spokesman.

All animal cruelty reports are investigated, with AVA officers surveying the vicinity of the alleged offence, interviewing eyewitnesses

and checking footage from closed-circuit television cameras.

The authority will also work with animal welfare groups, such as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), and other agencies when needed.

In 2017, 92 per cent of the 377 reports turned out to be non-cruelty cases, up from 78 per cent in 2016.

Established cases of cruelty accounted for 4 per cent of reports last year, with another 6 per cent of cases still pending an outcome.

The Straits Times had sought the figures from AVA following the Platinum Dogs Club saga.

The operator of the pet boarding facility was arrested last month for alleged animal welfare offences after pet owners complained that their dogs were mistreated.

Dr Jaipal Singh Gill, executive director of the SPCA, said the public needs to know when to call the authorities.

“If comfortable, for simpler cases, one can speak to the pet’s owner. We have seen cases that have had positive outcomes when neighbours assist to resolve issues,” he said. “If unsure, err on the side of the animal and make a report.”

Dr Gill added that while there are cases that involve outright cruelty, there are also those that are welfare issues, such as the neglect of pets.

Meanwhile, there are initiatives by AVA – including minimum age requirements for buying animals and pre-sale screening at pet shops – to minimise the number of pets being bought on impulse.

The Code of Animal Welfare, introduced in 2016 for pet businesses and in 2017 for pet owners, comprises minimum standards and best practices on animal housing, management and care.

While it is not an offence to not follow the code, the code can be used to support prosecution or other en-

forcement actions for animal welfare cases.

Nee Soon GRC MP Louis Ng, who founded Animal Concerns Research and Education Society, said that not many people know about the code.

He said the authorities could further simplify and present aspects of the code to the public more regularly, such as through social media.

Commenting on the figures released by AVA, Mr Ng said the increase shows that more people are aware of animal welfare issues, a sign that “society has progressed”.

He said AVA should release more in-depth information on investigations into alleged animal cruelty.

“People need to understand. You gain more trust if you can reveal more about the investigation’s proceedings and how you come to the conclusions.”

fabkoh@sph.com.sg



An abused cat was found dead in a rubbish chute in Ang Mo Kio Avenue 4 in March 2017.
PHOTO: AGRI-FOOD AND VETERINARY AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE

Fine, jail terms for offenders

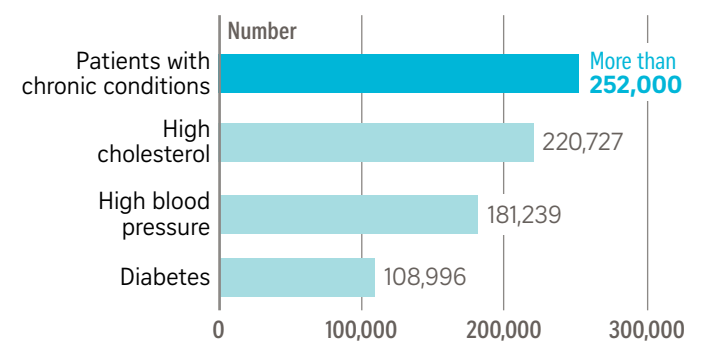
A 50-year-old man was fined \$16,000 last month for throwing a cat and a kitten out of a Housing Board flat window in Boon Lay Drive in July 2017. Krishnasamy Kaliyappan was also disqualified from owning a pet for 12 months.

A 39-year-old woman was jailed for four weeks in August last year for killing a pet bird at Block 101 Rivervale Walk. Tran Thi Thuy

Hang had hit her stepdaughter’s pet bird several times with a laundry pole in October 2017, because it bit her right cheek.

In October 2017, a 59-year-old man was jailed for eight weeks after causing the death of a cat in Ang Mo Kio Avenue 4. Ow Ah Lon admitted to throwing the stray cat on the floor of his home, before tossing it down the rubbish chute, in March 2017.

National Healthcare Group patients with chronic conditions

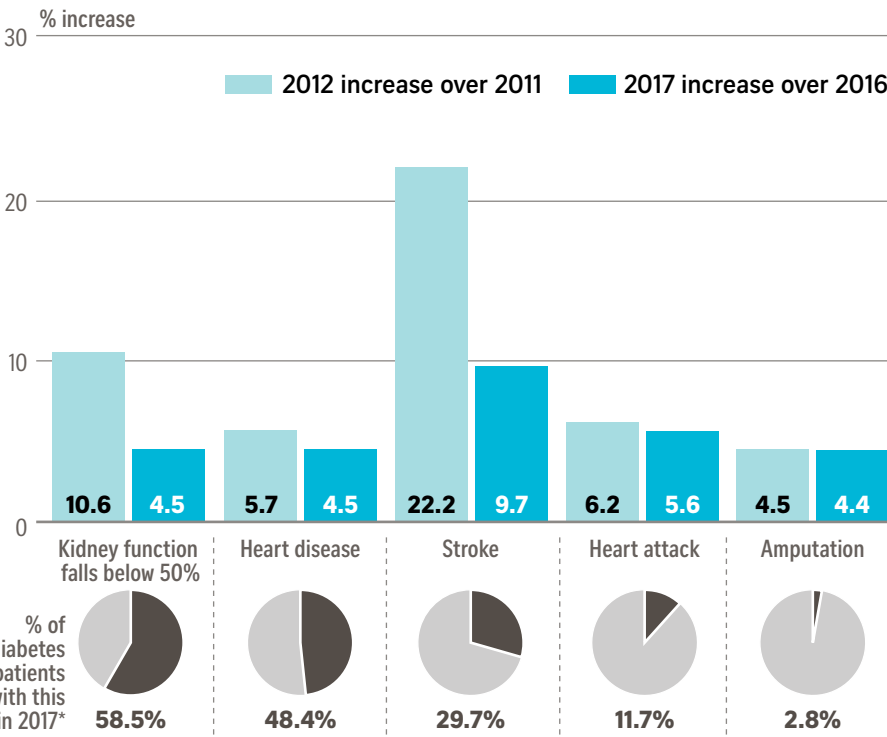


NOTE: Figures as at end 2017. Numbers do not add up as some patients have more than one condition.

THE ANNUAL COST OF TREATING PATIENTS WITH THESE CONDITIONS

End-of-life	\$11,916
Diabetes + hypertension + complications	\$5,000
Diabetes + complications	\$3,426
Hypertension + complications	\$3,410
Diabetes + hypertension	\$1,840
Diabetes	\$1,083
Hypertension	\$1,028
At risk (pre-diabetic or BMI of 23+)	\$628
A healthy person	\$221

DIABETES PATIENTS WHO SUFFER THIS COMPLICATION



NOTE: *Numbers do not add up as some patients have more than one complication.

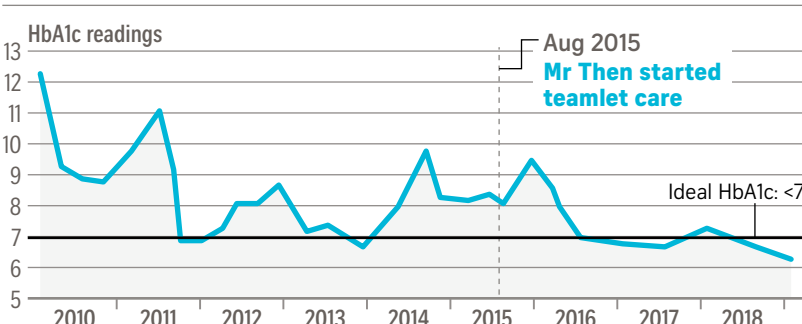
Source: NATIONAL HEALTHCARE GROUP STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS



Mr George Then has seen his blood sugar level drop to a healthy level under the teamlet care programme with Dr Tricia Chang (seated) and care manager Evonne Oh. ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG

Patient's blood sugar levels since Feb 2010

Sixty-three-year-old George Then's HbA1c trend from February 2010 to January 2019



Source: ANG MO KIO POLYCLINIC WITH GEORGE THEN'S PERMISSION STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

NHG slowly winning its fight against diabetes

Lower rate of increase in number of patients attributed to 'teamlet' care at polyclinics

Salma Khalik
Senior Health Correspondent

4.5%

Increase in diabetes patients whose kidney function fell to less than 50 per cent in 2017, a slowdown from the more than 10 per cent increase in 2011

The National Healthcare Group (NHG) has been quietly winning its fight against diabetes.

Although the number of diabetes patients it cares for is still going up, it has been able to slow the increase. This is both in terms of new patients as well as existing patients who suffer complications or die.

For example, over the past five years, it has slowed the rate at which patients were losing the use of their kidneys. In 2011, there was a more than 10 per cent increase in diabetes patients whose kidney function fell to less than 50 per cent.

The annual increase has shrunk over the years to 4.5 per cent in 2017. Kidneys functioning at less than 50 per cent cannot fully clear toxins, and the person is at risk of anaemia, early bone disease and kidney failure.

This, in spite of serving a population that is, on average, 43.3 years, compared with the national average of 40.5 years.

The number of diabetes patients had been going up by about 6 per cent a year from 2010-2013. This moderated to 4.9 per cent in 2014, and in 2017, the number rose by just 4.2 per cent.

Similarly, the growth in the number of diabetes patients with at least one complication, such as amputation, fell from 7.6 per cent a year in 2013 to 4.2 per cent in 2017.

Professor Philip Choo, NHG's group chief executive, attributes this to "teamlet" care at the polyclinics, where patients with chronic diseases are looked after by the same team of doctors, nurse and care coordinator.

The team monitors their progress more closely and would call should they miss an appointment.

Prof Choo said patients who have a good relationship with their doctor or nurse tend to do better.

They are more likely to exercise more, eat better, take their medicines regularly and, as a result, achieve better control over their blood sugar levels. This helps to reduce the complications for those already with the disease.

If its polyclinics had not changed the way they look after diabetes patients, Prof Choo said, there would have been 7,000 more diabetes patients suffering at least one complication in 2017 - or 38,849 of its patients would have had kidney failure, heart attack, stroke or amputation that year, instead of the 31,538 that actually suffered them.

The group, which serves a popula-

tion of two million, currently cares for over 252,000 patients with at least one chronic ailment. Among them, about 109,000 have diabetes - up from about 70,000 in 2010.

Slightly more than one in three diabetes patients have at least one complication, such as kidney failure, stroke or heart attack.

The risk of death among diabetes patients has almost halved since 2010. Men have a 30 per cent higher risk of death than women. Among the ethnic groups, Malays face the highest risk of death and Indians the lowest.

Prof Choo said the bad news is that NHG continues to see a high number of new diabetes patients. What this tells him, he said, is that care needs to move upstream, before patients get diabetes.

He said the data that NHG has collected over the years shows a clear trend: "It starts with daily wrong choices, slight obesity, high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure and diabetes, in that order."

Identifying patients with high cholesterol and blood pressure levels, who are at risk of getting diabetes earlier, and working with them to prevent it, might lead to better results.

The number of new diabetes patients has been growing each year, and they also appear to be getting younger. In 2012, there were 2,674 new diabetes patients seen by NHG doctors, with a mean age of 60.4 years. In 2016, the group saw 3,178 newly diagnosed diabetes patients with a mean age of 60.1 years.

The amount that the NHG spends on treating diabetes patients has more than doubled from \$215 million in 2010 to \$440 million in 2017.

These figures exclude patients from the north, under the Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, which joined the NHG last year.

salma@sph.com.sg

Diabetic's health improves under 'teamlet' care

Mr George Then, 63, became diabetic in his 20s.

For the next 30 years, the senior chartering manager with a shipping firm was "bo chap" (couldn't care less in Hokkien) about the disease, taking medication when he felt like it and sometimes skipping it for days.

Not surprisingly, his sugar level kept rising. In 2013, when he was in his 50s, he started going to Ang Mo Kio Polyclinic.

He saw different doctors every time and took his medicine as prescribed, but things did not improve. At one point, his blood sugar level rose to almost 10.

The healthy level for normal people is six and below. People are diabetic when the level exceeds seven.

He said: "I was doing everything I was told to, but the blood sugar kept rising. Even when I drank water, the glucose level went up."

He was one of the first patients the polyclinic put onto its "teamlet-based" care in 2015.

Under this scheme, a team of two doctors, a care manager who is a senior nurse, and a care coordinator who is not medically trained look after 5,000 to 5,500 patients with chronic diseases. The diseases are of varying severity.

Within months, Mr Then's blood sugar level dropped to a healthy level.

He was all praise for the teamlet care as he went to the same clinic and saw the same people during each visit. "They made me understand what I should do and why I should do it," he said.

He started exercising more. He

would park his car outside the Central Business District, "800 steps from my office building". It was also cheaper, he said.

But his exercise was sporadic until a friend suggested in 2016 that he join AIA's Vitality programme. He did and now does an average of 15,000 steps a day.

AIA put him with a group of seven people. If all members in the group achieve 250 points a week (they get 50 points for walking 10,000 steps a day and 100 points for walking 12,500 steps), every member will get a \$5 voucher. Members also get a \$5 voucher as individuals if they hit the weekly target.

So they encouraged one another to achieve that, said Mr Then.

His team always makes the grade, he added, so he gets \$10 in vouchers every week, or \$520 a year. He paid only \$80 a year to join.

Dr Tricia Chang, the polyclinic physician who looks after him, said anything that gets patients to exercise regularly is good. In fact, Mr Then's medication was adjusted slightly as the regular exercise meant he needed a lower dose to keep his sugar level under control.

He now goes to the polyclinic twice a year - once to see the doctor and the other, to see the care manager.

Today, the National Healthcare Group (NHG) Polyclinics have 27 teamlets looking after more than 120,000 patients.

SingHealth adopted the teamlet care model in 2017. It was then the only other polyclinic cluster.

Salma Khalik

Lianhe Wanbao holds roadshows to mark new focus, fresh look

Ng Huiwen

Chinese-language evening daily Lianhe Wanbao has launched a fresh look and new content to reconnect with readers and serve them better.

With its relaunch on Jan 18, the newspaper aims to be Singapore's first "people's paper", with content "for the readers, by the readers".

Lianhe Zaobao and Lianhe Wanbao editor Goh Sin Teck said this involves tapping social media monitoring tools to curate topics that are trending among its audience, before delivering them in a concise report.

The editorial team guides the development of these stories by filling the information gaps and verifying the facts, he added.

Readers interested in healthy eating, the hawkker trade, property trends or financial management can look out for tips and tricks in Wanbao's new editorial series too.

For instance, the series on healthy eating on Mondays will see a nutritionist evaluate recipes sent in by readers.

And on Tuesdays, the newspaper, which is published by Singapore Press Holdings, will feature the ex-

With its relaunch on Jan 18, the newspaper aims to be Singapore's first "people's paper", with content "for the readers, by the readers".

periences of hawkers.

Wanbao's lifestyle pages will also be dedicated to beauty on Mondays, food on Tuesdays, home or travel on Thursdays and health on Sundays.

As "our readers are not getting any younger", Mr Goh, 55, added that the revamped Wanbao comes with a cleaner layout that is easier to navigate.

There is a consistent colour scheme in each section, and also a bigger font size across all its pages.

Wanbao was started in 1983, after the merger between Nanyang Siang Pau and Sin Chew Jit Poh. It last went through a revamp in 2014 to focus on three Cs - care, connect and communicate.

On Jan 18, readers joined Wanbao editors at a roadshow at Our Tampines Hub, where they learnt



Chinese-language evening daily Lianhe Wanbao was relaunched on Jan 18 at a roadshow at Our Tampines Hub. The newspaper has a fresh look and new content to reconnect with readers and serve them better, and is organising roadshows at hawkker centres islandwide till March 31. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

about the key changes in the newspaper and took part in games and giveaways.

To mark its new focus, Wanbao is organising roadshows at hawkker centres islandwide till March 31.

Next month, the team will be at Kampung Admiralty, Yuhua Village and Ghim Moh Hawker Centre. The campaign will end at Tampines Round Market on March 31.

To attract new readers, copies of

the newspaper and complimentary two-week digital subscription redemption cards will be distributed.

Mr Goh said the response from Wanbao readers has been very encouraging so far, "with newspaper

sales going up for the past months".

Readers have said they appreciate the bigger font size and the interesting new content, he added.

nghuiwen@sph.com.sg

SDP and JTC trade words over campaign-launch venue cancellation

Tiffany Fumiko Tay

The Singapore Democratic Party (SDP) and JTC Corporation have posted on Facebook their versions of events which led to the last-minute cancellation of the venue booking for the political party's election campaign launch on Saturday.

The event was to have been held at a building in Eunus where JTC is

the landlord.

In the latest salvo yesterday, SDP posted what it said was the text of an e-mail sent on Friday from a representative of KCC Ventures, which manages the SLV Hub events space.

The e-mail purportedly said that all events on Saturday had to be cancelled due to a "last-minute unforeseen JTC inspection", and that a full refund would be issued.

SDP also claimed in the social me-

dia post that a manager from SLV Hub later said over the phone that the building management had insisted events that are political in nature are not allowed on its premises.

As a result of the cancellation, SDP said, it had to scramble before it held the event at Mandarin Orchard Hotel.

In its Facebook post on Saturday, JTC said it had "no prior knowledge" of the event, and that it had

informed the venue owner on Feb 8 of an inspection to take place on Feb 28, not Feb 23.

The planned inspection is part of ongoing investigations into unauthorised subletting activities, JTC said.

"It is totally irresponsible to conflate this issue with the ongoing investigations, and allege political motives on the part of JTC," it said.

SDP said if JTC wants to take issue with the matter, it should do so

with KCC Ventures.

"While at it, JTC should also clarify whether it has any policy barring political events such as the one we held yesterday from its premises," the SDP wrote in its Facebook post.

When contacted yesterday, JTC referred to its earlier statement.

SLV Hub did not respond to queries.

tiffanyt@sph.com.sg

59 NSF's in pioneer cyber specialist course

Apart from training at Cyber Defence School, the selected full-time national servicemen will also study at SIT

Lim Min Zhang

When he was 12, Private Clement Chin was so passionate about computers that he was creating his own program to strengthen his in-game character in online role-playing games.

And when the Cyber NSF Scheme was introduced to tap the talents of full-time national servicemen (NSFs) for cyber defence, Pte Chin, 23, jumped at it.

It was "an obvious choice" for the graduate from Singapore Polytechnic's Infocomm Security Management programme to apply for the Cyber Specialist Award.

"In this field, technology progresses very fast, and you can't just stop honing your skills for two years. If I went in as a 'normal' NSF, I might have to pick up from where I left off before I joined the army," he said.

Pte Chin is in the pioneer cohort of 59 NSF cyber specialists who began their 35-week course in December, said the Defence Ministry (Mindef).

They are being trained at the Cyber Defence School at Stagmont Camp in Choa Chu Kang.

So far, they have completed foundational modules such as on computer networks, and Web systems and technologies, said Mindef.

They will also study full-time at the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) for 15 weeks during this training period before graduating as full-fledged specialists in August.

Upon earning their ranks, they will perform advanced cyber roles for Mindef and the Singapore

Armed Forces such as in incident response and testing for security weaknesses in IT infrastructure and applications.

Even after they are deployed, they will go for weekly lessons at SIT – the first time NSF's can attend academic courses while employed in an operational role – to help them better perform their duties.

More details of the cyber specialists' training regime were shared for the first time at a media visit to Stagmont Camp last Wednesday.

That day, Mindef said it was looking to recruit some 300 regulars for two new cyber expert schemes under the military expert and defence executive officer schemes.

In recent years, Mindef has unveiled a number of measures to boost cyber security, such as the move to set up the Defence Cyber Organisation in 2017, after the theft of personal data of 850 national servicemen and Mindef employees in February that year.

The pioneer group of cyber specialists, all former polytechnic students, enlisted and completed their basic military training in the second half of last year. They were picked from about 250 applicants who sat a four-hour selection test last year.

As commanders, they also have to complete leadership training.

Captain Fuji Neo, 30, who is a

KNOWLEDGEABLE TRAINEES

The batch has quite a substantial amount of knowledge in this field, as most of them have been through three years of relevant studies in the polytechnics.



CAPTAIN FUJI NEO, 30, a trainer at the Cyber Defence School, which also has external trainers.



Private Clement Chin (left) presenting his work to Cyber Defence School trainer Fuji Neo (standing) in December. Pte Chin is in the pioneer cohort of NSF cyber specialists. PHOTO: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

trainer at the Cyber Defence School, which also has external trainers, said: "The batch has quite a substantial amount of knowledge in this field, as most of them have been through three years of relevant studies in the polytechnics," he said.

He said 58 of them have cyber-security-related qualifications, such as diplomas in information technology from Nanyang Polytechnic. The one exception has a diploma in mechatronics.

Mindef introduced the Cyber NSF Scheme in February last year to tap cyber talents with the required aptitude and skills from NSF's.

It is now working with other local and overseas universities to recognise the NSF's' academic credits from SIT, which will expand the range of universities at which they can complete their future studies.

About two-thirds of the specialists have chosen to serve four years in uniform, while the remaining ones are on the three-year scheme. They will earn regular service pay after first completing a minimum period as NSF's.

There have been about 100 applications for the second intake, who will enlist in the first half of this year.

mzlim@sph.com.sg



Mr Lim Puay Sia, 65, was unable to put out the fire using the fire extinguisher he kept in his car boot. SCDF firefighters subsequently used two water jets to extinguish the blaze. PHOTO: COURTESY OF LIM PUAY SIA

Retired SAF regular springs into action after spotting car on fire

Tee Zhuo

He may be retired from the Singapore Armed Forces, but when Mr Lim Puay Sia saw a car on fire on Saturday while driving along Rochor Canal Road, the 65-year-old immediately swung into action.

Grabbing a fire extinguisher he kept in the boot of his car, Mr Lim told his wife to stay put before rushing to put out the flames.

"At first, it seemed like it was working. But even as I tried to put it out, the fire spread and got bigger," said Mr Lim, a member of Teck Ghee's Community Emergency and Engagement Committee.

Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) firefighters as well as police officers can be seen in action in video clips that Mr Lim gave The Straits Times.

A fireman can be seen dousing the flames which had engulfed the car, sending clouds of smoke billowing from the vehicle.

Mr Lim, who held the rank of master warrant officer at age 55 before transferring to the civilian track as a defence executive officer, was first at the scene at around 3.50pm.

He said he did not see the driver of the car anywhere. "I was there for about 45 minutes, and the police were still looking for him," he said.

The SCDF said it was alerted to the incident at the junction of Syed Alwi Road and Rochor Canal Road, and its firefighters used two water jets to extinguish the fire which involved the car's engine compartment.

No injuries were reported.

teezhuo@sph.com.sg

ASIA NEWGEN FASHION AWARD

BAZAAR

We're looking for the **NEXT BIG FASHION DESIGNER**

Showcase your creativity regionally and represent Singapore at the Harper's BAZAAR Asia NewGen Fashion Award 2019

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN

FOR MORE DETAILS, VISIT WWW.HARPERSBAZAAR.COM.SG

SPHmagazines

SHIN MIN 新明日報

主办 环保工作坊

丑食剩食变美食!

主讲嘉宾

潘秀霞 (著名烹饪专家) 杨佩珊 (UglyFood 董事总经理)

日期: 3月10日 包括 礼包、下午茶

地点: 报业中心礼堂

扫描QR码即可报名

NATIONAL HEALTHCARE GROUP EYE INSTITUTE @ TTSH Commemorates

WORLD GLAUCOMA DAY

Basics of Glaucoma Management

16 MARCH 2019, SATURDAY

Tan Tock Seng Hospital | TTSH Eye Centre | Level 1

GLAUCOMA IS ONE OF THE LEADING CAUSES OF BLINDNESS.

It is a silent thief of sight - most are not aware that they have the disease. The NHG Eye Institute @ TTSH believes that Public Education and Eye Screening are the Keys to early Detection and Treatment of Glaucoma. Join us at our Public Forum and Eye Screening this year!

EYE SCREENING

TTSH Eye Centre | Level 1
8.30am - 11.30am (Limited to 150 pax)

*This Eye Screening is for anyone aged 45 and above and currently not seeing any Eye doctor

PUBLIC FORUM

TTSH Eye Centre | Level 1
9.00am - 10.30am
Limited to 60 pax

9.00am - 9.45am

"Doctor, What Is Glaucoma? How Do I Prevent It?," (English)

DR BRYAN ANG
Associate Consultant
NHG Eye Institute @ TTSH

9.45am - 10.30am

"Doctor, Can My Glaucoma Be Treated?," (Mandarin)

DR VIVIEN YIP
Associate Consultant
NHG Eye Institute @ TTSH

Pre-registration is required for both Basic Eye Screening and Public Forum, on a first-come-first-served basis. To register, please call 6357 2441 from 10.00am to 4.30pm (weekdays only). Registration begins on 25 February 2019 and will end once we reach maximum capacity. No Registration Fees Required.

TTSH CELEBRATES 175 YEARS OF CARE

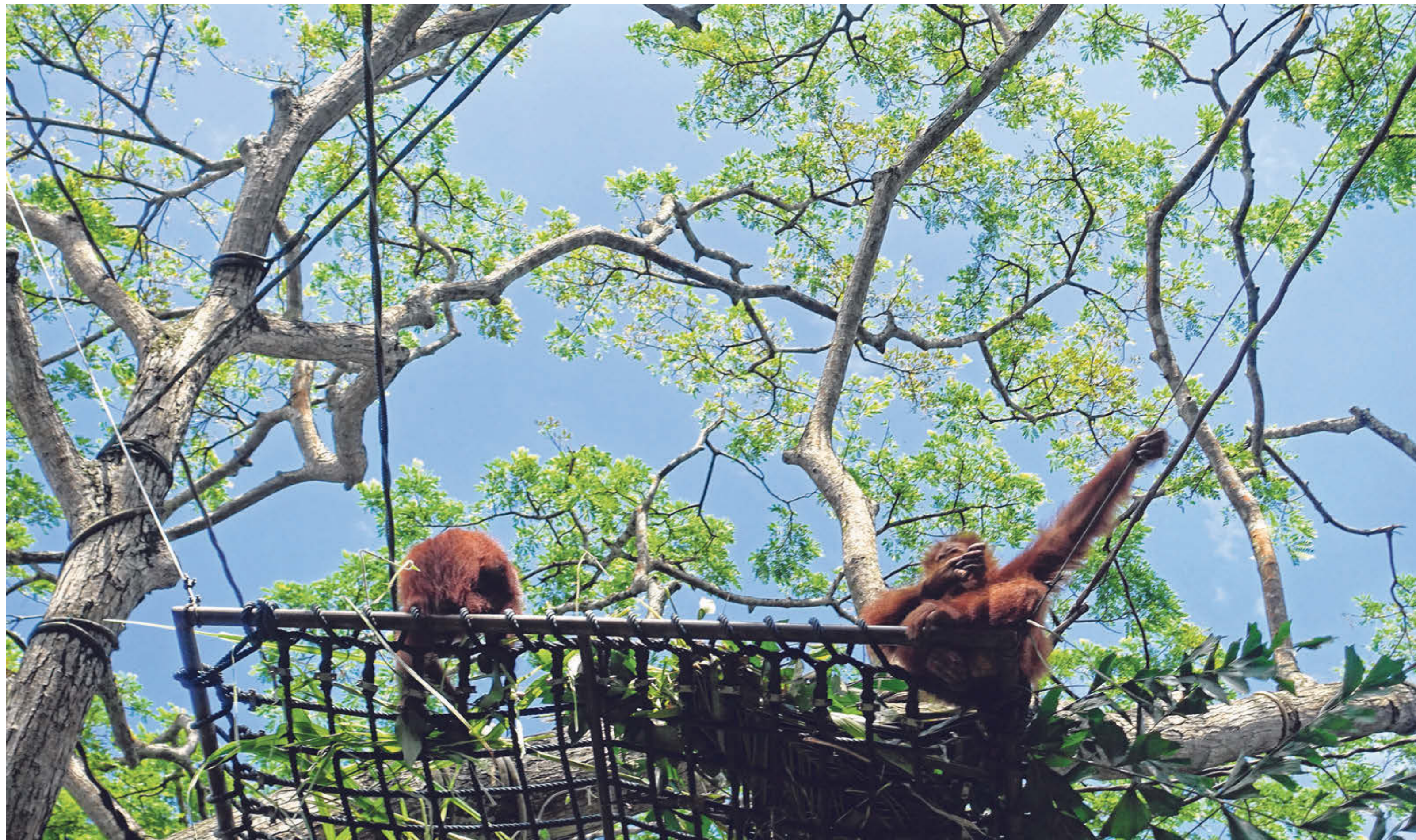
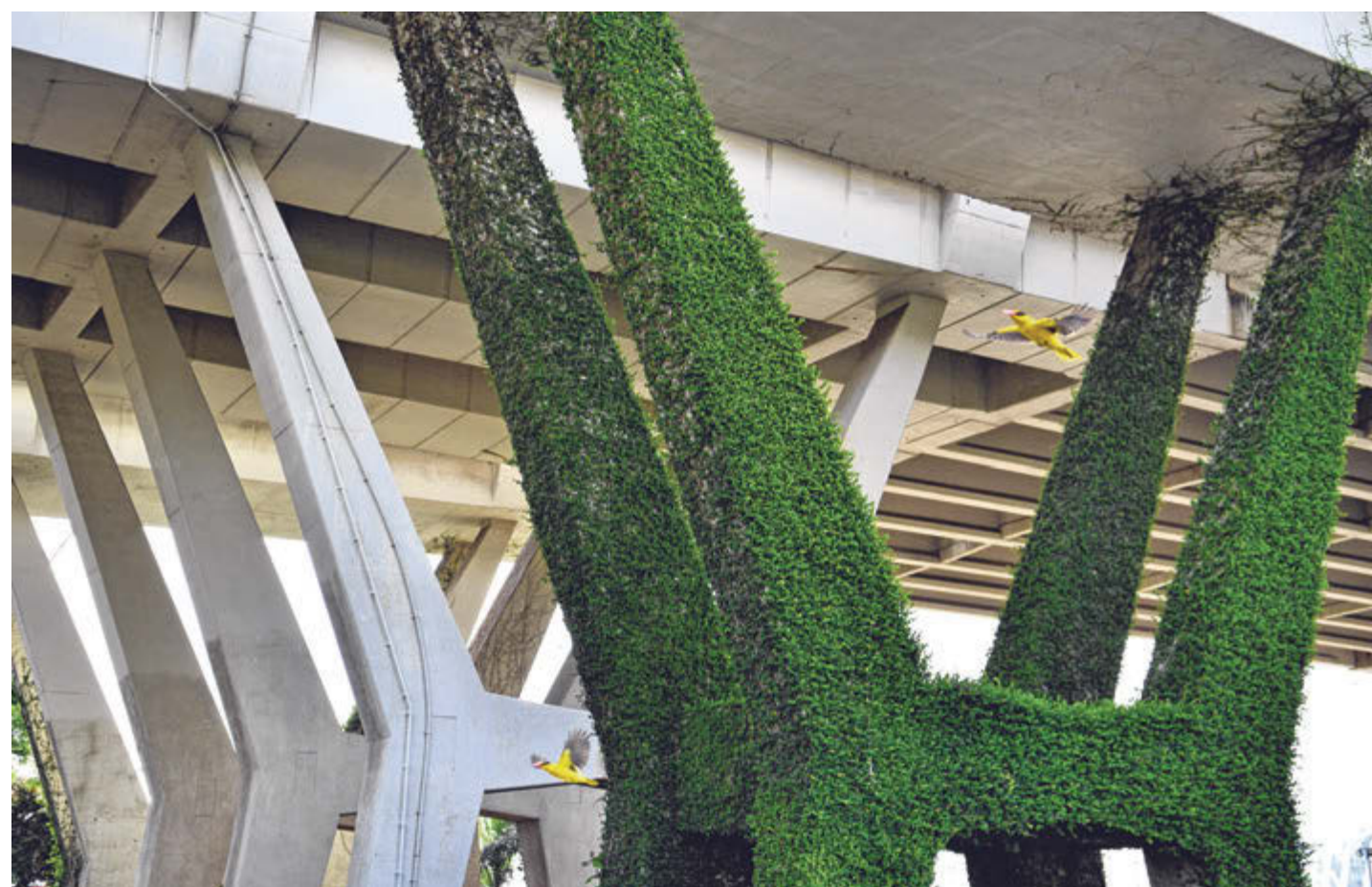
Organised By: **National Healthcare Group EYE INSTITUTE** **Tan Tock Seng HOSPITAL**

HOME INFOCUS

A Japanese freestyle motocross rider executing a stunt during rehearsals for the Marina Bay Singapore Countdown 2019 in December at The Float @ Marina Bay.
ST PHOTO: KEVIN LIM



A pair of Black-naped Orioles flying past creepers growing on the pillars of the Benjamin Sheares Bridge in the Raffles Avenue area on Jan 15.
ST PHOTO: JOYCE FANG

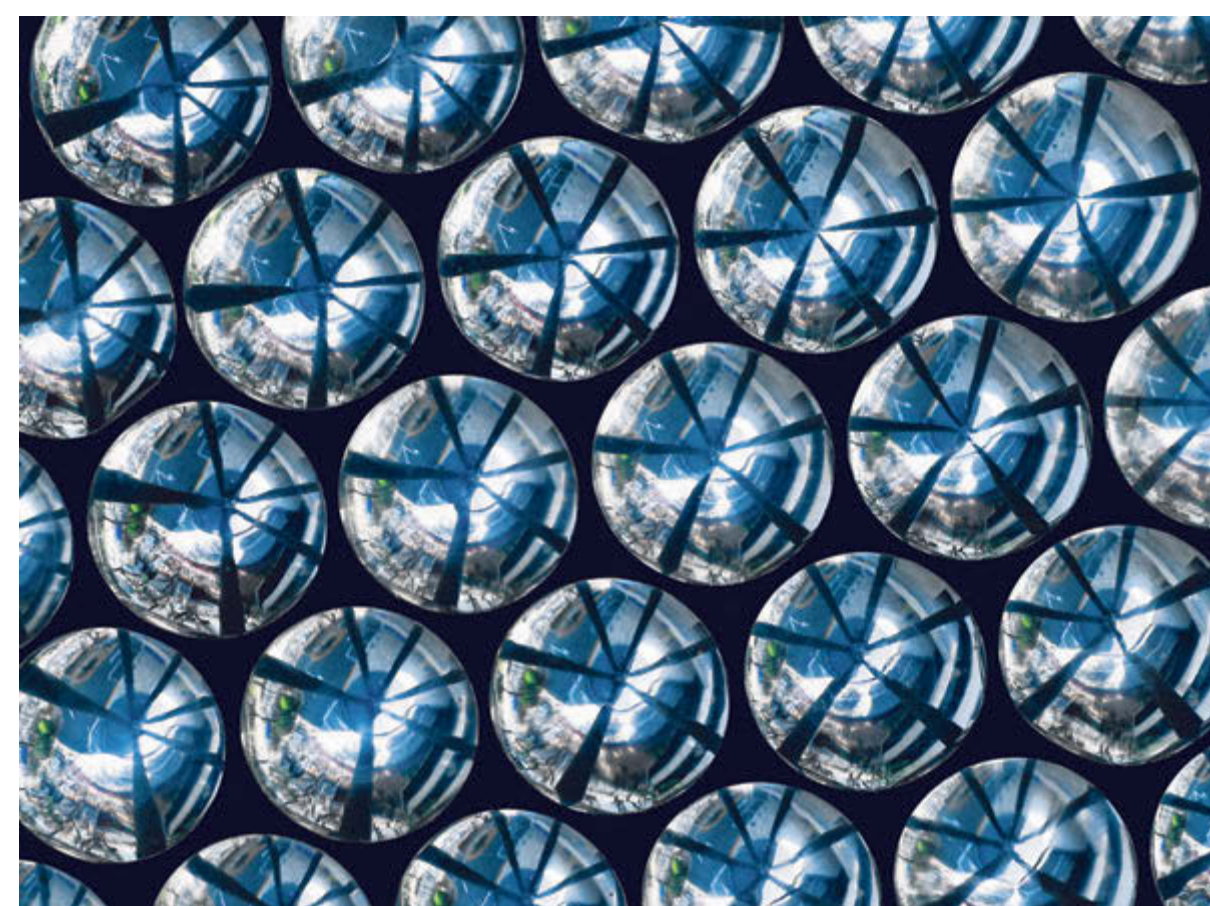
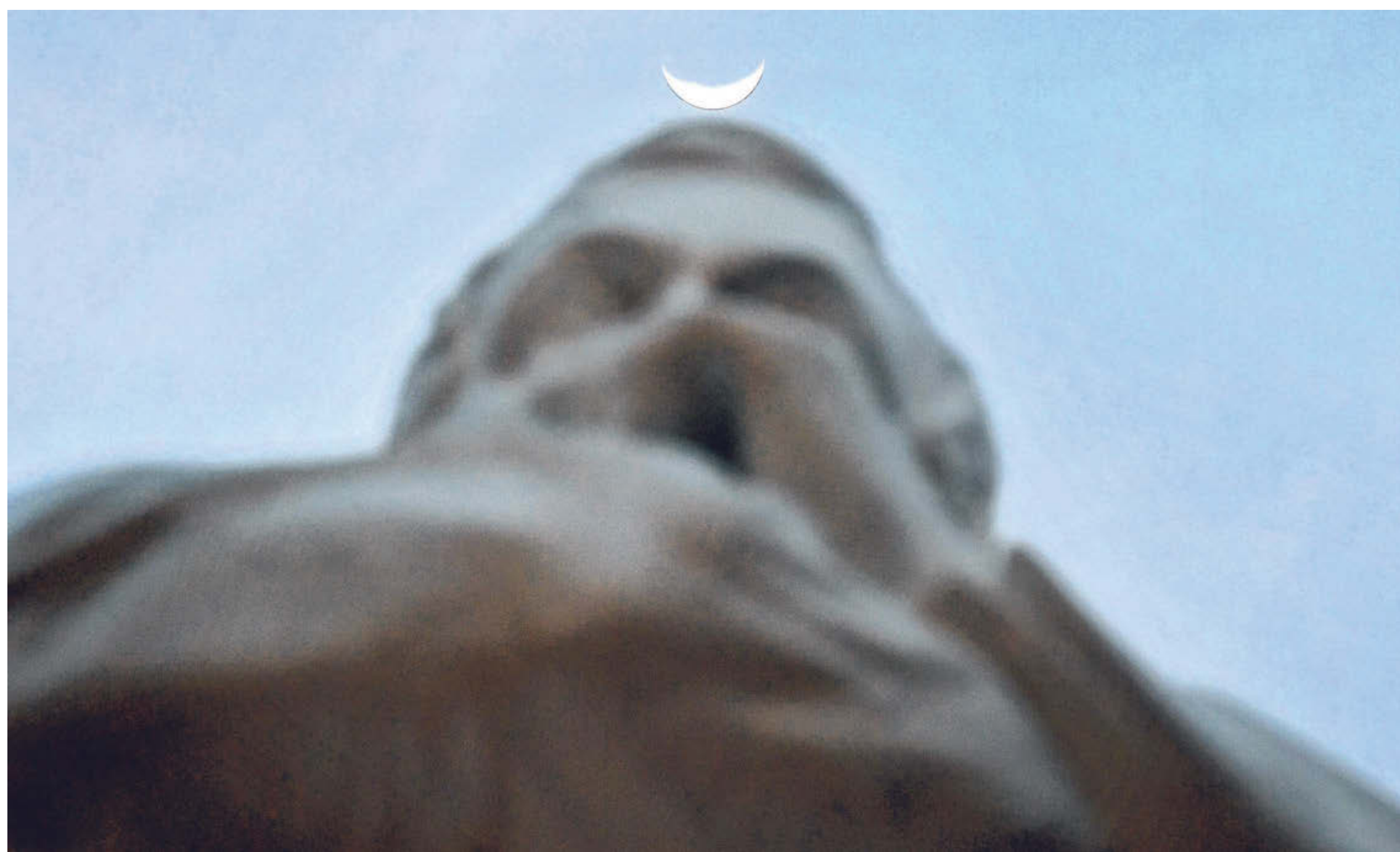


Endah (at right), the six-year-old granddaughter of the Singapore Zoo's legendary Ah Meng, stretching herself in the sun next to Joko (far left), also six, at the free-ranging enclosure for orang utans on Dec 26. Both orang utans were born at the zoo.
ST PHOTO: STEPHANIE YEOW

PERSPECTIVES AT PLAY

When taking photographs, people sometimes fall into the habit of shooting everything they see at eye level. The angle of the camera and proximity to the subject, and what is included in the frame, also play an important part in the final image. Photographing subjects from a low angle is a great method of capturing the world in an entirely different way. [The Straits Times Picture Desk](#) explores common moments from daily life from uncommon perspectives.

The waxing crescent moon rising over the head of Sir Stamford Raffles' statue at Empress Place on Jan 11. Singapore celebrates its bicentennial this year to mark the 200th anniversary of Raffles' arrival here in 1819.
ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG



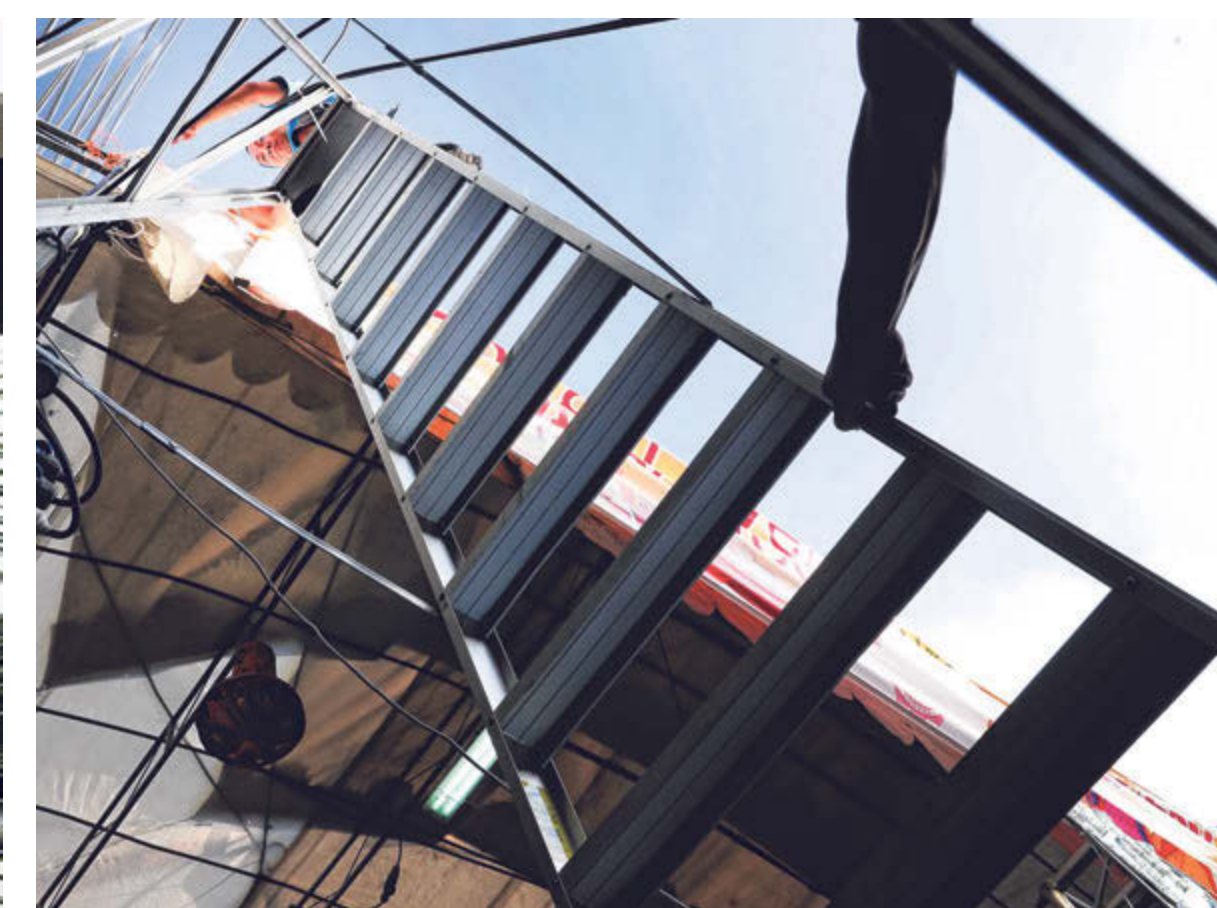
A reflection of a ceiling forming an intriguing geometric pattern. This was taken at the entrance of 'Scape, a non-profit organisation and youth hangout, in Somerset on Feb 21. ST PHOTO: SAHIBA CHAUDHARY



A man walking along the corridor of Block 27 in Toa Payoh East is so engrossed with his mobile phone that he is oblivious to the gigantic Tyrannosaurus sculpture soaring above the dinosaur-themed playground nearby. ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN



Thrill-seekers on the Mach 5 ride at the Prudential Marina Bay Carnival on Dec 25. The carnival is located at the Bayfront Event space and opens daily from 4pm to 11pm till March 24. ST PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG



Perched on a ladder, a man is seen working to secure the tentage as part of preparations for the Pongal light-up in Little India in Serangoon Road on Jan 11. ST PHOTO: KELVIN CHING

Are coding classes beneficial for pre-schoolers?

Some say coding is basic digital literacy; others say problem-solving concepts more important

Janice Tai
Social Affairs Correspondent

It is expected that children between four and five years old would meet some developmental milestones, such as the ability to recognise a few letters in the alphabet or follow short instructions.

But at just four years old, Melissa Wong is already able to write basic programs. At a coding class for pre-schoolers at LCCL Coding Academy last Tuesday, she came up with 14 codes comprising seven commands each, in 40 minutes.

Each code she wrote allowed her animated character – a fox – to move towards a desired target, like a doughnut or a pet animal, on the iPad.

Anxious parents are enrolling pre-schoolers in coding classes, in the hope that the children will learn to grasp logical concepts better and gain an edge over others in school and in life.

Dr T. Chandroo, an adviser to the Association of Early Childhood and Training Services, a non-profit organisation run by and for private pre-school and teacher-training operators in Singapore, said coding is basic literacy in the digital age.

He added: “It is never too early to introduce coding to young children because even children who cannot read or spell can grasp the logic of coding through symbols.”

Coding was added to the national curriculum in England in 2014, where it is expected to be taught to children from the age of five.

It is also embraced in the United States and countries in the European Union.

But there are detractors. Mr Andreas Schleicher said coding will be as irrelevant as trigonometry one day.

The director of education and skills at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development instead argues that more focus should be placed on teaching children tools that will benefit them in the future, such as data science or computational thinking.

Computational thinking involves concepts like recognising patterns

or solving problems in a sequential manner.

“You teach it to three-year-olds and by the time they graduate they will ask you, ‘Remind me, what was coding?’ That tool will be outdated very soon,” Mr Schleicher told The Straits Times.

Operators of coding schools say they are actually teaching the pre-schoolers computational thinking, of which coding is a subset.

“For children aged six and below, it is only realistic to teach computational thinking concepts instead of the actual programming or coding tool that is too complex for five- to six-year-olds to grasp,” said Mr Steven Yoon, director of Jules Corporation.

His company has run computational thinking classes for more than 3,000 pre-schoolers in child-care centres and community agencies here over the last two years since it first started in 2017.

Operators say the children are not being made to learn advanced programming skills or languages such as Python, which is generally the domain of adults who do data analysis.

Ms Candice Wang, co-founder of Coding Lab, which runs pre-school coding classes as well as free public workshops in partnership with the National Library Board, said her coding school does not take in children below the age of four.

“As they get more independent when they turn four, and are able to understand the concepts of sequencing and giving clear instructions, this is the age that is suitable for them to learn the concepts of coding,” she added.

Founder of LCCL Coding Academy Juliana Ung said since the children are not strictly learning the technical aspects of certain programming languages, the skills that they pick up will not become obsolete.

While she declined to give exact figures, she said enrolment of four- and five-year-olds increased by five-fold last year compared with the year before. It started offering such classes in 2017.

First Code Academy saw a 10 per cent growth in enrolment for children aged four to five last year compared with the year before.

At coding school Saturday Kids, which offers classes only to children aged five and above, the pupils



Melissa Wong with her brother (foreground) and teacher Juliana Ung, founder of LCCL Coding Academy. At just four years old, Melissa is already able to write basic programs. During a coding class for pre-schoolers, she came up with 14 codes comprising seven commands each, in 40 minutes. ST PHOTO: KELVIN CHNG



Avery Woo Jia Nui (left) and Connor Lee Cher Yee, both four, are taking part in a coding programme at Saturday Kids coding school titled “Curious Cubs: Explore the Wonders of Tech”. The children are coding and learning how to operate PETS, a friendly Japanese wooden robot that teaches the basics of computer programming. ST PHOTO: SAHIBA CHAUDHARY

NEVER TOO EARLY

It is never too early to introduce coding to young children because even children who cannot read or spell can grasp the logic of coding through symbols.



DR T. CHANDROO, an adviser to the Association of Early Childhood and Training Services, a non-profit organisation run by and for private pre-school and teacher-training operators in Singapore.

TEACHING CONCEPTS

For children aged six and below, it is only realistic to teach computational thinking concepts instead of the actual programming or coding tool that is too complex for five- to six-year-olds to grasp.



MR STEVEN YOON, director of Jules Corporation. Computational thinking involves concepts like recognising patterns or solving problems in a sequential manner. Operators of coding schools say coding is a subset of computational thinking.

learn to guide a robot to complete a task through commands.

They also use the iPad to create animations and pick up concepts like parallel thinking, which involves multiple lines of code with each carrying out its own functions simultaneously.

In teaching Melissa, Ms Ung guided the young girl on how to break problems down into smaller parts and refused to give her quick or easy solutions even when she struggled.

To cut screen time, several of the coding schools conduct some of the lessons offline.

At Jules, only 15 minutes in a typical one-hour class would involve

the pre-schoolers playing “coding” games through mobile apps. At First Code Academy, a screenless coding interface – a wooden robot – is used instead.

Lessons can range from \$250 for 40 lessons to several thousands for longer courses or workshops.

North East Community Development Council offers free coding classes for 1,200 Primary 3 to 5 children from low-income families to get them “future-ready”.

Said its spokesman: “We believe in equal opportunities for everyone regardless of their household situations.

“We want to level up the skills of children from underprivileged fami-

lies so that they are on an equal playing field with their peers.”

Mr Malcolm Wong, 41, first sent his daughter Melissa and her brother, now six, for coding classes last year because he wanted them to pick up logical reasoning skills.

“It is a basic survival skill,” said Mr Wong, director of a matchmaking agency.

“I don’t have aspirations for them to be artificial-intelligence programmers... If they have to be glued to their screens, this is the best reason for it instead of just watching YouTube videos in a non-interactive way.”

jantai@sph.com.sg

Varsity business courses should include sustainability studies: Experts

Jolene Ang

Business leaders need a heart for the planet and a head that can achieve growth while balancing the needs of the environment.

To achieve this, experts say universities should push for business courses to include modules on sustainability, which is about meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

These programmes will help students learn how the business world impacts areas such as the environment, economy and society.

Mr Paul Heng, managing director of NeXT Career Consulting Group, said: “We need to take care of Mother Earth so future generations can continue to enjoy it.”

“I think most of us, businesses included, know we have to do our part, but conveniently excuse ourselves because of other priorities, such as meeting shareholder expectations to deliver dividends.”

A number of modules have been introduced here to meet this need.

On Feb 12, the Singapore Management University (SMU) announced that business undergraduates will soon be able to take a second major in sustainability.

Students will learn about broad issues within the sustainability sphere and what businesses can do to reduce their negative impacts on communities and the environment, said SMU.

SMU’s Lee Kong Chian School of Business students will also address the issue in the business sub-disciplines, including finance, operations, marketing and entrepreneurship, and graduate as “specialists in sustainability”.

Nanyang Technological University currently offers a minor programme in environmental sustainability, under its Asian School of the Environment, and the National Uni-

versity of Singapore offers a broader environmental studies degree programme.

While it may appear that growth and sustainability are at opposite ends, said Mr Daniel Soh, managing partner of executive headhunting firm Leadership Advisory Inc, companies will benefit by striking a balance – for example, by being environmentally friendly.

“It leads to lower costs because companies end up reducing wastage from operations,” he added.

“The process also generates additional revenue from better and more innovative products that en-

able companies to create new businesses or markets.

“In this context, business sustainability can drive organisational and technological innovations that yield both bottom-line and top-line returns,” he said.

SMU said students enrolling in the sustainability major will develop a deep understanding of the challenges the world is facing as well as learn how to integrate sustainability initiatives in the management of a business.

Mr Heng said SMU’s programme is timely, adding that there is a growing need for students who are equipped to champion sustainabil-

ity efforts.

However, few companies are actively hiring such graduates, he said, adding: “Some have employees who wear double hats – corporate social responsibility cum sustainability; some conveniently park this (sustainability effort) under human resource, when it should be a function standing on its own.”

Agreeing, Mr Soh said it needs to be a whole-of-company endeavour.

If not championed by the company as a whole, including the chief executive and board of directors, sustainability initiatives “will fail”.

jolenezl@sph.com.sg

OXFORD INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Top A-Level choice for high-achieving and ambitious students

Why join Oxford International College?

- Ranked in the top of the UK A-Level League Tables based on A-Level results (as published by UK Education Advisers): 2nd as a Top Sixth Form College and 3rd as a Top Co-Ed Boarding School
- 83.5% of A*-A grades and 58.2% of A*-grades (Top result in the UK)
- 100% success rate for medical and dental applications (2018 entry)
- 50% success rate for Cambridge University applications (2018 entry)
- 100% success rate for Russell Group Universities

Yasmin Sarwar, Chief Education Officer at Oxford International College

Yasmin is known worldwide for her expertise in educating international students and helping them to gain entry into top universities in the UK and across the globe.

Her personal university success record includes:

- Over 150 students to Oxbridge, LSE and Imperial College London
- Over 250 students to Medical and Dental schools
- 100% students receive offers to Russell Group universities in the UK

1-5 London Place, Oxford, UK; +44 1865 203988; www.oicoll.co.uk

OXFORD INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Scholarships available

Apply now for September 2019 and January 2020 intake

Meet Yasmin in Singapore this March

World Uni Expo
Sunday, 3rd March, 2019
Venue: SUNTEC Convention Centre, Level 3, Hall 331
12:00 – 7:00 pm | Meet Yasmin Sarwar for 1-to-1 counselling sessions

Masterclass sessions conducted by Yasmin

2:30 – 3:30 pm | Getting into Top Universities - UK A-Level Pathway

5:00 – 6:00 pm | Getting into UK Medical Schools - UK A-Level Pathway

Free Admission
Places are limited

Call 61009800 for more information

Cinta teguh susuri masa, harungi duka

Don't miss more of these stories, only in **Berita Harian**

To subscribe, call 6388 3838 or visit sphsubscription.com.sg

BH

TODAY IN

联合早报

LIANHE ZAOBAO

PUB enhances its response to floods with portable flood barriers

公用事业局将添购首批便携式防洪栅栏 加强应对突发性淹水的能力

To subscribe, call 6388-3838 or go to sphsubscription.com.sg

IT'S A — THE NEW MARKET — DEAL

Produced by
sweetspot
Partner Content



View our photos at
www.instagram.com/besweetsg/



E-mail feedback to
sweetinfo@besweet.sg



The SK-II FutureX Smart Store and NomadX at Plaza Singapura. PHOTOS: WHITELABEL PR, SK-II



Let's get phygital

Some of today's most well-known brands are promoting a new shopping experience

BY MICHELLE BONG

More than a marketing buzzword, the art of going "phygital" has been on-trend in recent months here in Singapore.

This retail concept, coined through a mash-up of "physical" and "digital", refers to creating an interactive, technology-enabled shopping experience for consumers.

The reasons for this approach are simple: the bridging of physical and digital worlds can engage consumers, drive sales and contribute to a healthier bottom line. It is a win-win arrangement for both the brands and customers.

The best of both worlds

An example of this is NomadX, which occupies two floors at Plaza Singapura. According to an article in The New Paper in November last year, it was Singapore's first phygital multi-label retail concept store and it opened with a line-up of 17 brands offering new-to-market merchandise and unique experiences across beauty, fashion, technology and food and beverage sectors.

A gamification process kicks off the NomadX experience, which enables consumers to receive product and deal recommendations as well as customised shop discovery routes. Exclusives include Karl Lagerfeld in partnership with Robinsons

and Evenodd, as well as brands such as L'Oreal, Amorepacific and Bizen Okayama Wagyu Steakhouse by Aston Soon.

NomadX also houses the first physical outlets in Singapore for online retailers such as Alibaba's Taobao, Style Theory, Oo La Lab and food and beverage brands Teapasar and By Peapods.

Hello, strategic retail partnerships

Another example is the SK-II FutureX Smart Store — a ground-breaking partnership between Singapore department store Robinsons and Japanese beauty brand SK-II that took the phygital scene to a new level. Located outside Mandarin Gallery on Orchard Road till the end of last month, it analysed consumers' skincare needs onsite.

SK-II vice-president Sandeep Seth says transforming the beauty retail experience is a huge undertaking that cannot be done alone. He adds: "The collaboration with like-minded partners like Robinsons is an opportunity to delight consumers with exciting personalised skincare shopping experiences."

Mr Simon Naga, vice-president of Al-Futtaim (which owns Robinsons) in Asia says: "New retail concepts have definitely been picking up here in recent years. More so than ever, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels; the change that's happening around us only fuels our drive for growth and innovation."



Spotlight on beauty

Beauty and wellness trade exhibition BeautyAsia 2019 will be held from today to Feb 27, 11am to 7pm at Suntec Singapore Level 4 Halls 401 to 403. This marks the return of the region's largest one-stop trade show for the beauty, spa and health industry for the 23rd year.

Organised for professionals in the beauty trade, it will highlight current and upcoming beauty trends, advanced technologies promoting innovation and new possibilities in the local and regional beauty sector.



Be a leader in education

A degree jointly offered by the National Institution of Education (NIE) and Teachers College (TC), the Master of Arts in Leadership and Educational Change programme focuses on the development of educational leaders in the areas of organisational and curriculum leadership.

Students can sign up for the TC Summer Experience, which offers networking opportunities and builds cross-national learning communities for both local and global perspectives. Applications are open between April 1 and June 17 for the January 2020 intake. Visit www.nie.edu.sg/malec for details.



Return of an icon

Enjoy a satisfying meal at Orchard Hotel Singapore's 30-year-old restaurant The Orchard Cafe, which is back in business after extensive renovations. Its new welcomes customers in celebrating Singapore's "makan" heritage.

It features increased seating capacity, open kitchens, a tropical ambience and a new Signature Class buffet spread presenting delicious classics such as Braised Pork Knuckle Bee Hoon served in Leaf Pocket.

The Orchard Cafe is located at the lobby level of Orchard Hotel Singapore, 442 Orchard Road.

TOP PICKS

Soya good

Vegans and lactose-intolerant consumers can still indulge their sweet tooth with soya bean milk retailer Mr Bean's and home-grown ice cream parlour franchise Udders' new soya ice cream (priced from \$3.80). Dairy-free, egg-free and made using non-genetically modified soya beans, the ice cream is available in flavours Original Soy, Oreo Cookies, Salted Gula Melaka and Durian. Available at selected Mr Bean stores from March.



Enjoy unlimited data

Mobile service provider Zero1 has joined Singapore's growing pool of mobile virtual networks. Consider one of three SIM-only mobile unlimited data plans — 1GB To Unlimited at \$9.90 (U.P \$13.90), 3GB To Unlimited plus 12GB Bonus Data (\$39.90), and 9GB To Unlimited plus 18GB Bonus Data (\$39.90). Promotion ends Feb 28. Visit zero1.sg for more information.

Maximum flavour

Meet your new favourite comfort food — the KFC Mac 'N Cheese Zinger. In place of the usual burger buns are two crisp and golden-brown Mac 'N Cheese patties sandwiching the signature succulent KFC Zinger fillet, topped with crispy turkey bacon, lettuce and KFC cheese sauce. It is available as a meal (\$8.95) with a medium Whipped Potato and a regular Pepsi or a Zinger Box (\$10.95) with a piece of chicken, a regular Whipped Potato, regular fries and a regular Pepsi.



PHOTO CREDIT:
F&N FOODS PTE LTD

Green your diet

Here's a convenient way to fulfil one serving of your daily requirement of 2+2 servings of fruit and vegetables as recommended by the Health Promotion Board. F&N Fruit Tree Fresh Wonders Super Greens — Kale, Spinach & Broccoli Juice Drink with Organic Chia Seeds is made from 100 per cent juice, with no added sugar. It has been awarded the Healthier Choice symbol, and is available at major supermarkets and hypermarkets at the recommended price of \$3.25 for a 1-litre pack and \$1.30 for a 250ml bottle.

Natural remedies

Treat throat discomfort with NZ Health Naturally Manuka Honey Lozenges. Made with UMF 10+ Manuka honey as a main ingredient, they are available as Manuka Honey Lozenges with Lemon, and Manuka Honey Lozenges with Strawberry (for kids). Till Feb 27, buy two packs for just \$17.85 at any Unity pharmacy. Call 6271-8122 for more information.



COMING UP



Win a trip for two to Sydney
The Straits Times,
Bon Voyage, Feb 26



Singapore's Fastest Growing Companies 2019
The Straits Times, Feb 27



bizSAFE Convention 2019
The Straits Times, Feb 28



Dubai: where summer surprises and sizzling deals await you
<https://tinyurl.com/y3jmur3p>

THE STRAITS TIMES
A Singapore Press Holdings
publication
News Centre
1000 Toa Payoh North,
Singapore
318994

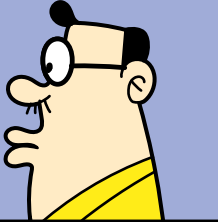
CONTACT US
General line: 6319-6319
Home: 6319-5397
stnewsdesk@sph.com.sg
Business: 6319-5360
stbusiness@sph.com.sg

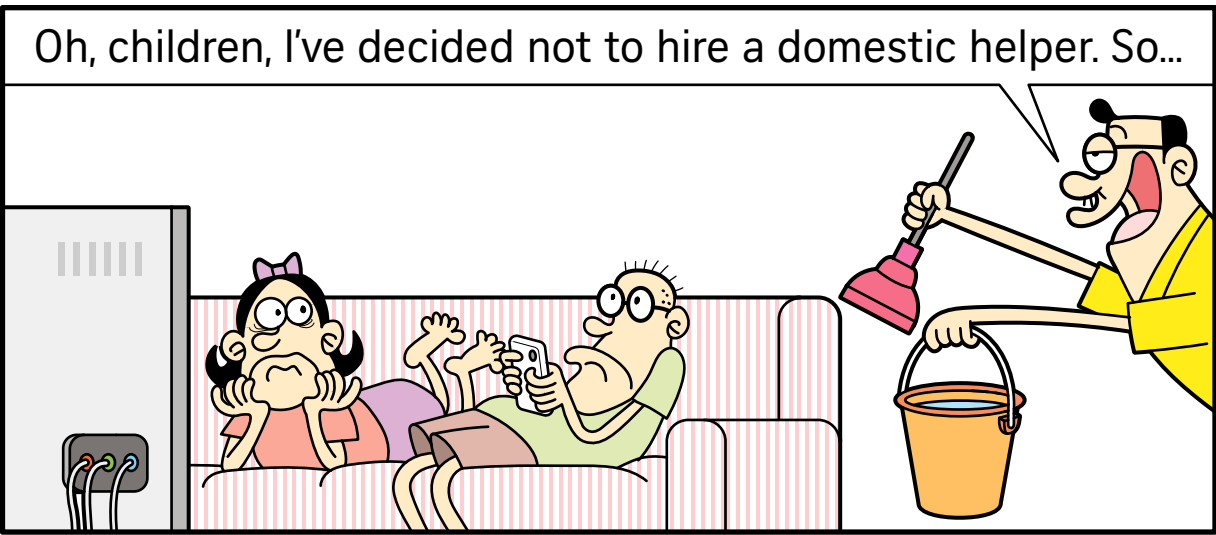
Life: 6319-5416
stlife@sph.com.sg
Art: 6319-5591
start@sph.com.sg
Newsline: 1800-828-2828
World: 6319-5745
stworld@sph.com.sg

Sport: 6319-5376
stsports@sph.com.sg
Pictures: 6319-5328
stimage@sph.com.sg
ST Digital: 6319-3232
stdigital@sph.com.sg

Lee Kuan Yew's TAKE

BUDGET 2019
To reduce dependency on foreign workforce





S'pore must make its own decision on Huawei

As a former telecommunications executive, I find it interesting that the United States is encouraging its allies to ban Huawei products (Britain 'against' full ban on Huawei despite US urging, Feb 19).

Given Singapore's Smart Nation ambitions, we must show our independence in terms of assessment and evaluation of policies in the field of technology.

First, to be proactive, the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore can conduct an independent assessment to ensure that our sovereignty is not compromised through the use of Huawei equipment.

M1 has been conducting trials with Huawei equipment since last year. The result of this independent assessment should be published in order to guide local telcos in the future.

Second, Singapore must not be seen as bowing to third-party political will, so as not to be taken lightly on the international stage.

Third, 5G technology is an important development that must not be derailed. Banning a technology or a company without technological or legal justification would hurt Singapore's worldwide reputation as a fair and just society.

Lastly, Singapore has over 100 Chinese companies listed in the Singapore Exchange, and more than five million Chinese tourists visit yearly, making a big portion of our gross domestic product dependent on China. Even Huawei itself has launched its cloud services business here.

Singapore must make its own decision, given its foreign policy and domestic needs, and show the world that it is its own man.

Edward Tay Wee Meng

Eliminate guards to transform security industry

For years, the incumbent stakeholders – the Government, the public, taxi companies and taxi drivers – struggled to address the demand for taxis during peak hours, rainy days and in remote areas not served by traditional taxis.

Then Uber came along in 2013 and triggered the transformation of the taxi industry.

Today, the security industry seems to be struggling to transform itself in spite of the various measures proposed (Major upgrade for the security industry, Feb 20).

Perhaps there are lessons from the taxi industry that can apply here.

First, focus on security outcomes, not security guards. With all the human lapses associated with security guards, one approach is to eliminate the guards.

By doing this, all the human lapses – sleeping on the job, being drunk while on duty, using threatening or abusive language, and failing to respond to a request for assistance – would disappear.

Today, there are a number of technology solutions that can eliminate the guard and provide better security outcomes, such as the use of video cameras and analytics to replace routine, labour-intensive patrolling.

They are spelt out in the Security Industry Transformation Map launched in February last year.

Why are they not broadly adopted by the industry? I suspect there may be little business motivation for the incumbent stakeholders to do so.

Why would the Security Association of Singapore, which represents the interests of security agencies, push for the adoption of solutions that eliminate the guard?

Neither can we expect the Union of Security Employees to do so.

As the largest buyer of security services at over \$350 million annually, the Government can take the lead.

For example, the Ministry of Education, with more than 300 schools, can be the first to eliminate night guards with technology solutions.

Liu Fook Thim

Crack down on vehicles with emission problems

Motorists will occasionally come across vehicles, both Malaysia- and Singapore-registered, that emit thick clouds of black smoke every time they accelerate.

The yearly vehicle inspection does check for smoke emission, but this is not frequent enough as the vehicle can develop a problem a few weeks after the inspection and go on to pollute the air for several months.

Increasing the diesel tax will not solve the problem, and only hurt those who have little choice other than to drive diesel vehicles.

Instead, the Land Transport Authority (LTA) can tackle the smoke emission problem in the following ways:

- Check and refuse entry to foreign vehicles with obvious smoke emission problems – telltale signs of which include blackened areas around the back bumper – at our land checkpoints.
- Encourage motorists to report vehicles with serious emission problems to the LTA.
- Have LTA officers stationed on overhead bridges to catch vehicles with emission problems.
- Fine both drivers and companies that own vehicles with obvious emission problems yet continue to use them.

Ng Peng Hock

WRITE IN: Letters should be meant for exclusive publication in The Straits Times. They should be no longer than 400 words and must include the writer's full name, address and phone numbers. The Forum editor reserves the right to edit the letters. For women, please indicate Miss, Ms, Mrs or Madam. Please e-mail your letter to stforum@sph.com.sg. Readers can also respond to letters via Facebook and Twitter.



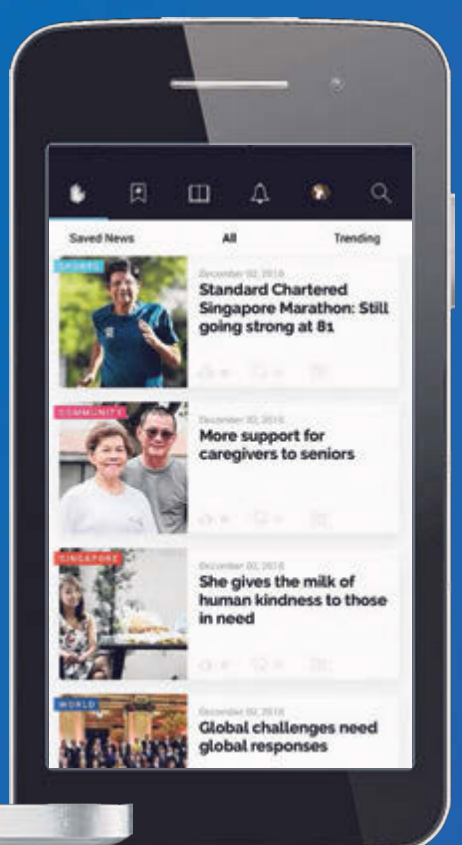
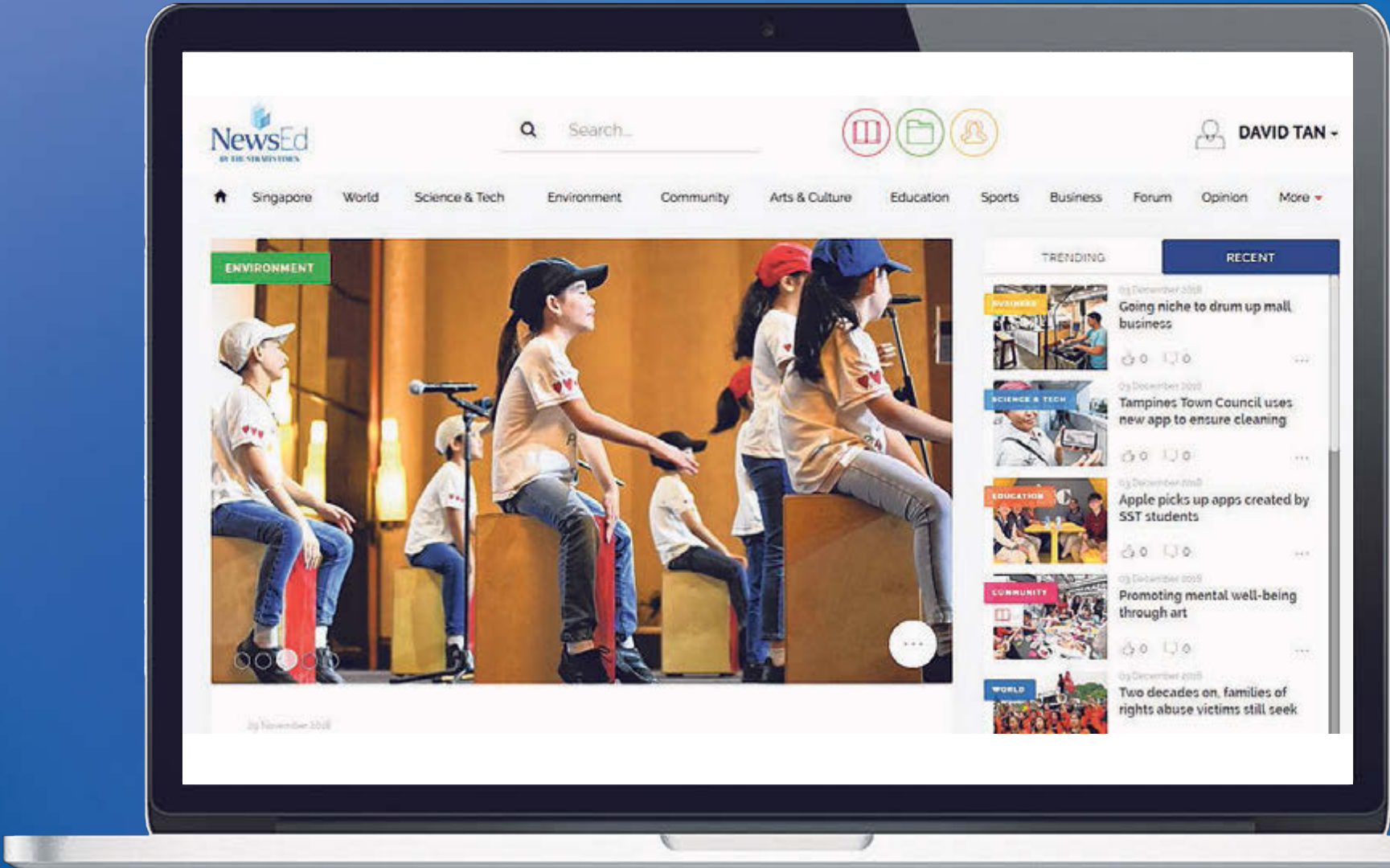
NewsEd

BY THE STRAITS TIMES

An online portal for schools to get students reading, talking about and learning from the daily news

Asian Digital Media Awards 2018

-  Gold Medal for Best Innovation to Engage Youth Audiences
-  Silver Medal for Best Reader Revenue Initiative



For inquiries, call 6388-3838 or e-mail cirschool@sph.com.sg

Make students do community service instead

Safety concerns were rightly pointed out by Mr Goh Chin Leng in his letter (Don't make school expedition camps compulsory, Feb 15). But another issue with school expedition camps is that lessons on teamwork and overcoming challenges are taught in an unrealistic context. The fears and challenges students face today tend to surface

in the context of cyber-bullying, fear of social isolation, pressures from the demands of expectations or encountering inappropriate adult behaviour. Learning to canoe or scale high elements in camp does not equip students to deal with such fears. Developing teamwork skills should not be a justification for school expedition camps as there

are ample opportunities for students to learn to work as a team through daily school activities. Co-curricular activities and community service also enable students to learn about teamwork and to interact with students from other schools. Community service enables students to learn more about the disadvantaged, develop empathy and contribute to the

needs of the underprivileged. The costs and resources spent on school expedition camps can be better channelled towards helping the needy. In view of these, such camps should either be replaced with community service activities or, at the very least, not be made compulsory. **Yong Su Lin (Ms)**

Screen external facilitators thoroughly

Mr Goh Chin Leng's call to not make school expedition camps compulsory is timely (Don't make school expedition camps compulsory, Feb 15), and the safety risks he highlights should not be taken lightly. A significant number of camp facilitators are not Ministry of Education staff but employees of external companies providing camp services. It is important to find out whether each facilitator is screened thoroughly before the camp.

Do schools conduct independent checks on the facilitators, rather than rely on what is submitted by the companies? The safety of students and the security of their personal data are at risk if there is a lapse in the screening and training of staff and external facilitators involved in school expedition camps. Until it can be reasonably guaranteed that such camps are accident-free, students should not be forced to attend them. **Jean Chia Ai Kim (Ms)**

Don't let one incident spoil school camps

Some schools say going to camp is compulsory but, in reality, parents have the last word on whether their child will attend the camp (Don't make school expedition camps compulsory, Feb 5). Expeditions and camps offer youth the opportunity to work with people of all ages, thus building inter-generational relationships and forging lasting friendships.

Overnight campers learn to take care of themselves, trust adults other than their parents and carers, and forge new friendships. Many campers enjoy this new-found independence and recognise the need to look after themselves, one another and their environment. A good camp facilitator is equipped to engage students in a

variety of settings, while developing and building upon their personal competencies. These competencies, such as communication skills, team-building skills, conflict management, leadership skills, the ability to overcome limitations and personal growth, will help shape our children's futures.

At camps, young people are also exposed to a range of activities that they might not have tried before. Often, when children are not under the supervision of their parents or carers, they will display a more adventurous spirit. Teacher involvement is vital to every successful camp. Our students have the opportunity to form relationships

through first-hand experiences with trained, caring adults and experience a sense of achievement in a supervised, safe and positive environment. While there may be instances of some adult supervisors exhibiting negative behaviours, we should not eliminate overnight camping altogether. We must explore and introduce

new measures to ensure that only good and qualified adult supervisors are appointed. We should not allow one incident to create a blanket ban on camps that are useful for the development of the child. **Delane Lim** Secretary-General, Outdoor Learning & Adventure Education Association

Outdoor education develops students in ways classrooms can't

We thank Mr Goh Chin Leng for sharing his concerns on expedition-based camps (Don't make school expedition camps compulsory, Feb 15). Outdoor education provides opportunities and benefits that cannot be replicated or achieved in the classroom. These include teaching students

about teamwork, resilience, overcoming adversity, experimentation and risk-taking, and making friends from diverse backgrounds. This is why under the National Outdoor Adventure Masterplan, every student is given the opportunity to experience outdoor education as part of the school

curriculum through the Programme for Active Living, physical education lessons and cohort camps, to build confidence, resilience, ruggedness, and social cohesion. Teachers, outdoor adventure educators and Outward Bound Singapore (OBS) instructors, are key to delivering quality and safe

outdoor experiences for students. They are rigorously selected, and trained to do their job well. Where schools engage external service providers to conduct their camps, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has put in place a rigorous system of registration for instructors. MOE will continue to work closely

with schools, OBS and other key stakeholders to fulfil the objective of outdoor education and safeguard the safety and well-being of students. **Tan Chen Kee (Mrs)** Divisional Director Student Development Curriculum Division Ministry of Education

Sanctity of life not violated with tweak to suicide law

We thank Ms Ho Lay Ping for her views (Pitfalls of decriminalising attempted suicide, Feb 16). We would like to reassure Ms Ho and others that the proposal to decriminalise suicide still upholds the sanctity of life. The difference is that now,

instead of dissuading people who are already so distressed they attempt suicide by adding the prospect of facing criminal charges to their concerns, we would like to do so by giving them the support they need, and helping them to regain the desire to live.

As noted by the Penal Code Review Committee in its report, there is growing recognition that prosecution is not ideal for managing cases of attempted suicide. Such individuals may not be deterred by punishment, and some would benefit instead from

medical treatment. Many of the stakeholders consulted, including voluntary welfare organisations, support decriminalising suicide for the same reasons. The fact that life is valued continues to be reflected in the fact that abetment of attempted suicide remains a criminal offence. We have also proposed changes to other laws to provide the police

with the powers to intervene to prevent those who are attempting suicide from succeeding or causing injury to others. **Goh Chour Thong** Director, Media Relations Ministry of Home Affairs **Nooraini Hamzah (Ms)** Director, Corporate Communications Ministry of Law

FORUM ONLINE

1. VOICES OF YOUTH

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD: Workforce grew in tandem with industry transformation.

3. DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE: Provide appropriate intervention to help children learn.

ST MORE LETTERS ON www.straitstimes.com Join readers in sharing heartwarming stories at www.facebook.com/groups/whatsgd/

Eligible for SkillsFuture credits

THE STRAITS TIMES

ENGLISH MASTERCLASS

The Executive Edition

You can now use SkillsFuture credits to pay for the course. Companies that want their employees to write better should also sign up for this one-day course that teaches them to:

- Write simply and effectively to customers
- Avoid embarrassing errors in print or online
- Compose clear e-mail messages to get things done
- Use words to better market products
- Organise facts to convey corporate and impactful messages

STskills

“This is a powerful course.”

Annie Chan
Customer engagement manager

I attended the ST Masterclass as I knew the ST professionals would have lots of tips for me to further sharpen my writing. No matter how good your writing is, you can always get new ideas from other professionals. I was right. I learnt new techniques to communicate even more effectively.

Agnes Sng
Writer and former lawyer

Dates: March 5 or 12
April 17 or 24
(1-day course)

Time: 10am to 6pm
(including lunch and tea breaks)

Venue: Level 8 Tower Block
SPH News Centre
1000 Toa Payoh North

Fee: \$499 a person

6319-5076

STmasterclass@sph.com.sg

Sign up now at stskills.sg

ST+

news with benefits

Check out

A HEALTHY YOU

tomorrow

for tips to help you

stay in the pink of health

STClassifieds

BUY IT • SELL IT • FIND IT

A
H
E
A
L
T
H
Y

Y
O
U

PICTURE THIS



ST PHOTO: DESMOND WEE

Mirror magic

With A View, an installation by creative design agency Superiore Design Associates, is made up of parallel mirrors in the shape of shophouse windows. This creates a series of reflections that seem to recede infinitely into the distance.

Photonico is a website offering high-quality stock photos that celebrate Asian contemporary culture and heritage. It is a platform that showcases the thousands of editorial and stock photos that our staff and contributing photographers have shot. These photos can be purchased for personal and commercial use at an affordable price.

www.photonico.asia



To contribute photos, get in touch with us at team@photonico.asia



SEARCH BUY USE

- 1 **SEARCH** from a vast selection of curated Asian culture and heritage photos.
- 2 **BUY** photos of old and modern Singapore, travel, nature, food, daily life and more.
- 3 **USE** the photos on different platforms with our various licensing options.

SHOOT SHARE EARN

- 1 **SHOOT** your own photos of Singapore and Asian street scenes, nature, daily life and travel.
- 2 **SHARE** them with us and be part of our community of photographers at Photonico.asia
- 3 **EARN** when your photos are sold with our 50 per cent revenue share programme.

What's the **buzz** ?

Pick up your daily reads
at our stores islandwide.

C1

BUSINESS

16.6%

FALL IN BEST WORLD SHARES LAST MONDAY FOLLOWING A BUSINESS TIMES REPORT C2



Mr Charles Goodyear believes a compromise in the US-China trade war is coming soon, though probably not by March 1. He also says the US' stance on forced technology transfers is unfair: "Any time companies do joint ventures... they both have to make concessions and allow the other to use their technology or production opportunities or distribution systems... but the net is a benefit." ST PHOTO: GAVIN FOO

Former CEO-designate of Temasek upbeat on S'pore

It can weather uncertain times if it remains premier business centre: Charles Goodyear

Tee Zhuo

These are uncertain times for global trade but if Singapore stays the course and continues to make itself an attractive business centre, it will prevail in the long run.

That is the view of Mr Charles "Chip" Goodyear, former chief executive of mining giant BHP Billiton and, for a brief time, Ms Ho Ching's successor to run Temasek.

Mr Goodyear told The Straits Times in a wide-ranging interview last Wednesday that there is continued attraction to Singapore as a business centre, given its meritocracy and the competitive environment that embraces free trade.

It is not hard to see why Temasek found the American a good candidate to be its first foreign chief; Singaporeans may recall that he nearly took over in 2009.

He left after six months as CEO-designate but said he still keeps up

with the "fantastic people".

"Ultimately it was not going to be the right arrangement, I think... (but) I have lots of respect for Ho Ching and the team."

Mr Goodyear, who heads Goodyear Investment Company in addition to doing non-profit work, was here to deliver a lecture on tariffs and protectionism at Yale-NUS College last Thursday.

His talk to about 250 people traced the history of views on protectionism and addressed the benefits and costs of tariffs.

Singapore's trade slowed overall last year, but total merchandise trade grew 9.2 per cent year on year to hit \$1.1 trillion, crossing the trillion-dollar milestone for the first time since 2014.

With speed bumps on global trade set to continue, at least for the short term, is Singapore equipped to meet these challenges?

Mr Goodyear, 61, said: "Slowdown in global trade will, of course,

have an impact, given so much of the country's economic activity is related to it. But, in the long run, as production and business activity go towards where it is most efficient, Singapore will continue to be a beneficiary (of trade)."

US-CHINA TRADE WAR

Mr Goodyear's choice of topic for his talk is a timely one.

Tit-for-tat tariffs between the US and China have been hurting international trade for the past seven months and dragging down the global economy.

Negotiators have yet to reach a compromise with a looming March 1 deadline, when US tariffs on US\$200 billion (S\$270 billion) worth of Chinese goods are set to rise from 10 per cent to 25 per cent.

Mr Goodyear believes a compromise is coming soon, though probably not by March 1.

Washington has accused Beijing of forcing American companies operating in China to share technology with local partners and hand over intellectual property secrets, which China has denied.

Mr Goodyear said the comment

UPBEAT OUTLOOK

Slowdown in global trade will, of course, have an impact, given so much of the country's economic activity is related to it. But, in the long run, as production and business activity go towards where it is most efficient, Singapore will continue to be a beneficiary (of trade).



MR CHARLES GOODYEAR, on whether Singapore is equipped to cope with the slowdown in global trade.

on forced technology transfers was unfair: "Any time companies do joint ventures, both bring things to the table.

"So they both have to make con-

cessions and allow the other to use their technology or production opportunities or distribution systems, and there's always a sacrifice – but the net is a benefit."

It is only when technology is actually stolen outside the agreement in a joint venture, for example, that it becomes a problem, he added, noting: "I think you'll see an agreement that starts to address these issues."

FOREIGN WORKER QUOTAS

Trade and Industry Minister Chan Chun Sing said Singapore aims to be a neutral place for China and the US to conduct economic activity.

He told Bloomberg TV last Thursday: "I don't think we want to be in the position whereby we are only dealing with one and not the other, and I believe this is the same position for the rest of the Asian countries as well. Everybody wants to be plugged in."

Mr Goodyear similarly pointed to the trust Singapore engenders with business people: "It's a place where many different cultures, countries, can feel comfortable."

While last Monday's Budget had commitments to strengthening eco-

nomics competitiveness, it also tightened foreign worker quotas.

Mr Goodyear sees the change as a short-term one to support local jobs and families, but one that will not affect the Government's long-term commitment to competitiveness.

While unfettered free trade might be good in theory, politicians have to "live in the real world", he said. "You can't do things which are seen to be detrimental to your voters."

Mr Chan said as much in the Bloomberg interview, calling the move to tighten foreign worker rules a "surgical" one targeted at specific industries to fine-tune the labour market.

The aim is "to make sure that the Singapore foreign manpower dependency is on a sustainable trajectory", the minister said, adding that Singapore remains open to talent and is "playing for the long game" with this Budget.

STAYING COMPETITIVE, RESILIENT

Mr Goodyear's key hopes for Singapore over the next five years involve staying true to its foundations, but also embracing critical thinking in its education.

He used to visit twice a year but has not been able to return as much as he would like in the past three years.

"I look out the door, and it's incredible what's going on in Singapore," he said.

Although based in the United States, Mr Goodyear, a married father of two, has stayed connected to Singapore, thanks to Yale-NUS College, where he delivered the lecture.

He is a trustee at Yale University – one half of the partnership with the National University of Singapore.

Yale-NUS president Tan Tai Yong said: "Mr Goodyear strongly believes in the value of establishing a liberal arts college in Singapore and has been a constant supporter."

Mr Goodyear said Yale-NUS is an example of how Singapore can continue to stay resilient: "Moving from a technical education with one that has critical thinking.

"Questioning in the right way why and how things are being done. That sort of critical thinking will continue to improve society in years to come."

Singapore should also continue to do some of the things it has always done that make it a unique place.

He said: "Singapore began as a meritocracy, a level playing field, minimal tariffs. This created strong companies that can compete globally... I think that gives it a strong platform."

He recalls the first time he was in Singapore, in the mid-1980s, and being impressed by how everything just worked as compared with the rest of the region at the time.

While that has stayed the same, he marvels at how the landscape has improved and how the city is now much more vibrant, something he attributes to the nation's ability for long-term planning.

"Singapore does a better job than any other place in thinking 30, 40 years down the road. Whereas in other countries, they think to the next election."

He is optimistic about Singapore's future if it continues to do what it has been doing.

He said: "There are places where you take a look and you say, 'Oh gosh, they need to change direction'. But for Singapore – keep doing what you're doing."

teezhuo@sph.com.sg

Kraft Heinz shares dive on triple whammy

NEW YORK • Kraft Heinz might need a new recipe.

The American packaged food giant, known for its iconic ketchup, cheese and hot dog brands, reported a troika of bad news last week – a net loss of US\$12.6 billion (S\$17 billion), a US\$15.4 billion write-down on assets and a regulatory subpoena – that sent its shares plummeting 27 per cent to a record

low on Friday, a plunge that wiped out more than US\$16 billion in market value.

Created in a 2015 merger, orchestrated by investment guru Warren Buffett and private equity firm 3G Capital, Kraft Heinz is facing the downside of austerity as a strategy for boosting profits.

A scathing article in The Wall Street Journal said the company's "experiment in radical cost-cutting has failed" and "management has few good options".

Kraft Heinz's famous zero-based budgeting approach to cost-cutting requires every expense to be justified in each period, pushing managers to drastically cut spending.

But that philosophy can lead to the elimination of investments needed to drive profit and sales growth, and it can be undermined by a market downturn.

The food industry has for several

months faced a rise in logistic costs, and ingredients and materials.

Kraft's strategy worked for two years, allowing it to generate profit margins that were the envy of its rivals. But growth in sales stalled in the first quarter of 2017, and six consecutive quarters of poor performance led to an asset write-down of US\$15.4 billion on two of its flagship brands, Kraft and the Oscar Mayer meat products.

Kraft has built its reputation on products such as ready-to-eat macaroni and cheese, while Oscar Mayer is known for deli meats and hot dogs, and Heinz for its ketchup and other condiments.

But consumer tastes have been changing, with rising concerns about health issues and a growing shift from processed foods to fresh produce.

Meerschaeft Capital Markets' Mr Gregory Volokhine said: "All they

have done is lower costs as competing companies like Danone and Nestle invest in products that are more in line with current public demand."

Many companies in the food industry have responded to the changing trends: McDonald's, the world leader in fast food, in 2016 stopped selling chicken treated with antibiotics, and now offers hamburgers made with fresh beef.

Mr Volokhine said Kraft Heinz seems to have "applied recipes that worked for a time, but the problem was no longer in the expenses but in products that became obsolete".

The company also flagged to investors a subpoena it received last year from the US Securities and Exchange Commission related to its procurement practices.

Kraft Heinz said that as a result of an investigation with the help of an outside lawyer, it recorded a US\$25

million "increase to costs of products sold".

Following that bad news, the pressure will be even higher to do a deal.

The company is considering dropping failed brands, a step that would pave the way for a merger, which could achieve more savings and boost profits.

Kraft Heinz approached Unilever, which makes Lipton tea and Dove soap, in 2017 but withdrew its US\$143 billion offer after news of its talks with the Anglo-Dutch giant became public.

If the "Bank of Buffett" is still open, Kraft Heinz may be able to get a transformative deal done.

But with its shares plummeting to a record low and big questions emerging about the strategy, pulling off a big acquisition – something that's already been tough – may be even harder from here.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, BLOOMBERG

Best World hiring third party to review practices

Move follows report over difficulty in tracking sales of its line of skincare products in China

Marissa Lee

Best World International is hiring an independent reviewer to scrutinise its business and accounting practices, after The Business Times raised concerns last week over the challenges in tracking sales of its DR's Secret line of premium skincare products in China.

In a statement last Saturday, the company told shareholders that it has conducted its business ethically and in compliance with applicable laws, but "is not responsible for the accounting and sales records of the franchisees, who are independent third parties".

Up until a week ago, shares of Best World had been on a multi-year rally, driven by strong growth in China. But the mainboard-listed company requested a trading halt last Monday after its shares fell 16.62 per cent following a BT report, "Sales of DR's Secret in China: Best World's best-kept secret?", published that day.

Best World derives 66 per cent of total revenue from sales of the DR's Secret line of premium skincare products in China under its franchise model. Revenue is booked when the franchisees in China purchase inventory from Best World.

At least one analyst has pointed to challenges reconciling between upfront sales figures and underlying consumer demand in China.

Best World said the findings from the independent review will be published and reported to its audit committee, as well as to the Singapore Exchange Regulation.

Separately, the company's auditor, Ernst & Young, has laid out an audit plan for the group's financial statements for the year ended Dec 31, 2018, which will include reviewing samples of revenue contracts and relationships with customers for evidence of related-party sales.

In China, where the franchise model has been adopted since the second quarter of last year, "EY will also consider conducting site visits at BWL Lifestyle Centres operated by franchisees on a sample basis,



Best World's booth at a sales exhibition in Singapore. The firm derives 66 per cent of total revenue from sales of its DR's Secret line of premium skincare products in China under its franchise model. Revenue is booked when the franchisees in China purchase inventory from Best World. PHOTO: BEST WORLD INTERNATIONAL

and will request confirmations from franchisees on sales transactions with the group", the group said.

These planned audit procedures are "appropriate to ensure the occurrence, completeness and measurement of revenue recognised by the group", Best World's board of directors believes.

Both the audit report and independent review will be watched closely by investors.

This is because Best World's unique distribution model for DR's Secret in China gives outsiders limited visibility over how its franchisees operate and record sales. In the past, Best World had used the term "social selling" to describe how its franchisees operate.

Best World clarified last Saturday: "The group does not directly conduct any sales transactions in China through online stores or social media, including Taobao. The products are primarily distributed in China by franchisees directly to consumers through BWL Lifestyle Centres in China..."

"Franchisees may also use online and social media platforms as communication tools, which, for example, enable customers to send messages through platforms like WeChat to franchisees to place orders informally, make payments separately by bank transfer or online money transfer platforms, and arrange for delivery or pick-up of such products at BWL Lifestyle Centres."

Last week, BT wrote that not a single one of Best World's franchisees is listed on the company website. Generally, its retail locations in China are exceptionally hard for consumers to track down.

Since the BT story ran, Best World has listed the addresses of 33 BWL Lifestyle Centres on its website. It said it has 33 franchisees now, up from 28 at the end of last year.

However, the registered names of the franchisees have not been disclosed, and Best World's management did not immediately respond to a request for disclosure sent by BT last Thursday.

On Saturday, Best World clarified the payment terms and accounting treatment for its franchisees: "Generally, franchisees pay the group for the products in cash before delivery, though the group may consider extending credit terms to franchisees on a case-by-case basis."

It added: "The group is not responsible for the accounting and sales records of the franchisees, who are independent third parties."

Even so, Best World's management "periodically visits the franchisees to understand their operating conditions and the market demands for the products", it said.

"As of Dec 31, 2018, the group had worked with each of the 28 franchisees signed in 2018 for an average period of five years," it added.

To ensure reliable financial reporting when it switched to a franchise model, Best World also hired a third-party internal controls consultant firm to review the group's internal controls policies with respect to entity-level controls, including accounting and cash management procedures, it said.

It did not identify the firm. This firm conducted physical inspections of 10 BWL Lifestyle Centres operated by franchisees and per-

formed background and qualification checks, reviews of sales and promotions records, inspection of inventory and compliance management systems, and licence reviews, Best World said.

Best World also confirmed on Saturday that the direct-selling licence it obtained in 2016 covers only "certain health supplement products over a limited geographical space in China", and does not cover the DR's Secret skincare line.

Direct selling, in which companies recruit sales promoters to sell products directly to end consumers outside the companies' fixed outlets, is a regulated activity in China, as part of a broader crackdown on illegal pyramid schemes.

"Since obtaining the direct-selling licence in 2016, the group has not conducted any sales in reliance of the direct-selling licence," Best World clarified.

It said it had considered adopting a direct-selling model in China, but later dropped the idea as it would require the expansion of the coverage of the group's direct-selling licences, and the establishment of service outlets in every district of every city in which the products are distributed due to legal requirements, which would have been "inefficient" and "costly".

The group added that it had obtained legal advice from its legal counsel that the operation of its franchise model is lawful. It did not identify its legal counsel, except to say that it was one of the largest law firms in China.

Best World has also used data from Euromonitor to show that it was the 13th-largest company in

China's premium skincare market in 2017.

Last week, BT reported that it was told by the market research firm that Best World was "not significant enough to be tracked" according to its research methodology.

Best World clarified on Saturday that it had commissioned Euromonitor to perform "customised research" late last year, and obtained the ranking directly from Euromonitor.

It explained: "Euromonitor was not able to ascertain Best World's ranking prior to conducting the 'customised research', as the company was an emerging player operating in the fragmented premium skincare market in China. The company's ranking was ascertained based on the additional market information and industry data obtained by Euromonitor through 'customised research'."

Best World did not elaborate on the exact nature of "customised research", except to say that it is of a narrower scope and "more company and category focused than the research methodology used in producing 'published research'."

Best World had been audited by RSM Chio Lim since 2003, until it was replaced by EY in 2017, with EY partner Ang Chuen Beng as lead engagement partner. At the time, Best World's audit committee explained that a periodic rotation of auditors would enable the company to benefit from fresh perspectives and enhance the value of the audit.

Trading in shares of Best World will resume today.

marilee@sph.com.sg

In a statement last Saturday, the company told shareholders that it has conducted its business ethically and in compliance with applicable laws, but "is not responsible for the accounting and sales records of the franchisees, who are independent third parties".

Commentary

Digital-first mindset key to small firms maximising Budget 2019



Mervyn Koh

For The Straits Times

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play an essential role in the health of Singapore's economy, accounting for half of the country's gross domestic product and employing 65 per cent of its people.

It is therefore not surprising that Budget 2019 included specific measures to help small businesses embrace digital technology and improve the skills of their employees.

As Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat said in his Budget speech last week, the measures were part of industry transformation efforts to position Singapore as a "global-Asia node of technology, innovation and enterprise".

Two major Budget 2019 initiatives for businesses are a Scale-up SG programme by Enterprise Singapore to help high-growth local firms innovate, grow and venture overseas, and an additional \$100 million for a new SME Co-Investment Fund III.

Meanwhile, the SMEs Go Digital programme, which began in 2017, will be expanded to include a wider range of pre-approved digital solutions that small businesses can adopt readily.

Under this programme, small businesses can continue to apply for the Productivity Solutions Grant for funding of up to 70 per cent of the total cost when applying for a pre-approved solution, which lowers their cost of digitalisation.

A survey that United Overseas Bank (UOB) conducted late last year, with more than 500 small businesses in Singapore, found that more than half of the respondents had used the Productivity Solutions Grant in 2018.

Four in five respondents also said the grant was effective in such areas as raising productivity and strengthening digital capabilities.

THINKING DIGITAL

But while these measures are important, to succeed in today's digital economy, small business owners need to possess a digital-first mindset. This requires them to take the time to understand the benefits of technology for their business.

For owners who are uncertain about how to start their digital transformation, there are many avenues where they can seek advice.

For example, UOB and the labour movement's NTUC USME have joined forces to organise monthly consultation workshops to help small businesses and their employees understand how they can use solutions like UOB BizSmart.

They can also receive practical guidance on how to use digital solutions to improve their businesses. Such workshops give small businesses a guiding hand, enabling them to adopt new technology more quickly and effectively.

Small business owners also need to develop an action plan to drive the adoption of digital solutions at the workplace.

The productivity gained through

these solutions can help to overcome challenges such as rising costs, lack of manpower and limited budgets.

Meanwhile, businesses that are strengthening their technological capabilities can enrol for the SMEs Go Digital programme announced in Budget 2019.

Solutions such as UOB BizSmart under the SMEs Go Digital programme's Start Digital Pack can offer small businesses a simple and cost-effective way to manage and automate operational processes such as payroll, invoicing and inventory management more efficiently.

With UOB BizSmart, we have seen businesses almost halve the time spent on administrative tasks. This time can be directed to other more critical areas of the business.

By using the Start Digital Pack in the SMEs Go Digital programme, small businesses can also access and adopt e-commerce, customer engagement and online marketing solutions to increase their sales and revenue growth.

Together, these solutions can help a small business identify the right audience for its products,

increase its customer base or retain existing customers by improving their experience.

More importantly, a digital-first mindset is one that seeks and develops ways to engage employees in the transformation journey.

KEY ROLE OF BUSINESS OWNERS

Based on our experience of working with small businesses, we see that owners with a positive mindset towards digitalisation are more likely to inspire their people to be open to the benefits of technology.

They are also the ones who will encourage their employees to upgrade their skill sets through initiatives such as the national SkillsFuture programme and Professional Conversion Programmes, which offer training for mid-career switchers.

The UOB survey also showed that three in five small businesses prioritise equipping their workers with digital skills this year.

The new Professional Conversion Programmes in the 2019 Budget will provide small businesses with more options to upskill their employees.

Mr Heng said in his Budget speech that "leaders of successful companies are those who are committed to raising the capabilities of their workers by redesigning jobs and reskilling their staff".

Similarly, a small business' digital transformation journey is successful only if its employees are on the same path too.

The 2019 Budget measures are a positive step to help small businesses accelerate their digitalisation journey to remain relevant, resilient and progressive.

But for that to take place, small business owners must first build a digital-first workplace culture and help their employees embrace the benefits of digitalisation.

They also need to know they are not alone in this process as they have the support of the Government, financial institutions and industry associations at every stage of their digitalisation process.

stnewsdesk@sph.com.sg

• The writer is the country head of business banking Singapore at United Overseas Bank.



Global growth headwinds dim outlook for MAS tightening

The Singapore dollar's three-month winning streak is facing its stiffest test yet as global growth headwinds dim the outlook for further central bank tightening.

An above-consensus inflation report today would go a long way towards ensuring the currency's advance remains on track.

A gauge of the nominal effective exchange rate, which the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) guides to conduct policy, is showing signs of weakness amid trade tensions and a slowdown in China.

On the flip side, strong domestic demand and resilient inflation are keeping alive wagers that the MAS will accelerate the pace of appreciation for a third straight time in April.

Unlike central banks that use interest rates to tackle inflation and growth, the MAS steers the Singapore dollar against a basket of its counterparts, adjusting the pace of appreciation (or the "slope"), the width of the target band and the level at which that band is centred.

Its decisions to tighten policy last year were spurred by rising inflation, underpinned by an improving labour market and robust economic expansion.

Singapore's leading index suggests growth will hold steady despite greater downside risks to the global economy. Resilient domestic demand will continue to put pressure on core inflation, which is at its highest since 2014. Should growth accelerate, there could be a greater pass-through of import and labour costs to consumers, the MAS and Trade and Industry Ministry said last month.

The MAS' April policy decision is still "live", economist Mohamed Faiz Nagutha at Bank of America Merrill Lynch wrote in a Feb 19 note to clients. It could surprise the market with a hawkish bias given core inflation at or above the historical average, he wrote.

Still, uncertainty over global growth has taken some wind out of the Singapore dollar's sails. The International Monetary Fund last month cut its forecast for the world economy for the second time in three months, warning that rising trade tensions could spell trouble.

The nominal effective exchange rate is estimated to be trading 1.4 per cent above the midpoint of the MAS' policy band, down from a high of 1.6 per cent in December, according to a Standard Chartered model. Versus the US dollar, the Singapore currency has weakened by about 0.4 per cent this month, sliding to 1.3511 at the close of trading last Friday.

Public-sector spending will offer little support to mitigate external risks, with a government report last week showing that the Budget's macroeconomic impact will likely be neutral this fiscal year.

Mr Vishnu Varathan, head of economics and strategy at Mizuho Bank in Singapore, sees a 60 per cent chance that the MAS will tighten policy in April. "It's a binary risk," he said. "A pause after back-to-back tightening in 2018 admittedly makes for an increasingly compelling case." BLOOMBERG

MarketsInsights

Extended US-China trade talks in spotlight

Focus also on key data releases from US and Asian economies

Leila Lai

Progress on the trade talks between the world's two giant economies will take centre stage this week, with meetings between the United States and China in Washington extended by two days as the parties race to reach an agreement ahead of the March 1 deadline.

US President Donald Trump is also set to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong Un this week in Hanoi, Vietnam, for a second summit on Wednesday and Thursday.

Investors should note that "there would be ample opportunities" for Mr Trump to make comments during Asia trading hours, said IG Markets strategist Pan Jingyi.

Mr Trump last Friday said he is

likely to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping some time next month at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida.

He also told reporters that he thinks "there is a very, very good chance that a deal can be made" and he could extend the tariff truce deadline "if we are doing well".

US markets traded higher on trade optimism last Friday, but pared gains on reports that US officials think more time is needed to resolve the remaining issues.

Last Friday, the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.7 per, while the S&P 500 added 0.6 per cent and the Nasdaq Composite jumped 0.9 per cent.

Ms Pan said regional markets will likely trade cautiously into the end of this week unless an extension to the truce is confirmed before the current deadline expires.

Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell will appear before the Senate Banking Committee tomorrow and House Financial Services Com-

mittee on Wednesday to elaborate on the latest Fed report.

"Expect the US lawmakers to question on Fed's patient message and its intentions on its balance sheet in 2019," said UOB's Global Economics and Markets Research team.

The US will see several data releases this week, as government agencies clear the backlog caused by the recent government shutdown. These include fourth-quarter gross domestic product (GDP) figures and personal consumption expenditure price index figures on Thursday, and the ISM manufacturing index on Friday.

The GDP report will combine the initial and second readings, and expectations are for growth to slow to 2.5 per cent from 3.4 per cent in the third quarter, according to a Bloomberg poll.

Ms Pan noted that stock markets reacted negatively to disappointing December retail sales earlier this month, and a similar reaction

with downside risks for the US dollar could result if the GDP figures fall short as well.

In Asia, China is set to release its latest manufacturing and non-manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI) surveys. Official PMIs are scheduled for Thursday, while Caixin figures will be out on Friday.

"January's manufacturing PMIs had diverged between the official and private number, though both remained within contraction territory. This is an expected likelihood with February's reading as well," said Ms Pan.

At the same time, the market may take the reading with a pinch of salt due to the Chinese New Year holiday earlier this month, she added.

Other Asian economies with data releases this week include South Korea with February trade data, and Japan, Indonesia and Thailand with February consumer price index (CPI) data, all on Friday. Fourth-quarter GDP data is expected from Hong Kong on Wednesday, followed by the same for India on Thursday.

Singapore will release January's CPI today, followed by industrial production figures tomorrow. Thursday will see the release of bank lending and producer price index numbers.

Markets that will close this week for holidays include the Philippines on Feb 25, Taiwan on Feb 28 and March 1, and South Korea on March 1.

leilal@sph.com.sg

US and Chinese officials at trade talks in Washington on Thursday. The talks have been extended by two days as both sides race to reach a deal before higher US tariffs for Chinese goods kick in on March 1. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

S'pore insurance veteran named president-elect of UK body

Insurance veteran Tan Suee Chieh has been named president-elect of the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries (IFoA) in the United Kingdom.

The IFoA is the chartered professional body dedicated to educating, developing and regulating actuaries in the UK and internationally.

Mr Tan takes on the president-elect position in June, and Mr John Taylor becomes president.

Mr Tan will take on the role of IFoA president in 2020, becoming

the first Asian to do so.

He said: "I'm very proud of my career as an actuary and the work I have done in the insurance industry. It has been hugely rewarding."

He added that the new role will enable him to "support the profession across geographical boundaries and its continuing efforts in reinvention to meet the needs of business and society in a sustainable manner".

IFoA has 31,000 members, with around 8,400 based in Asia.

Mr Tan said IFoA's reach in Asia has been rising in tandem with a substantial increase in the number of qualified and student actuaries.

"We will continue to accelerate our attention on this part of the world as South-east Asia is of prime strategic importance to us."

"This is a reflection of the underlying attractive economic fundamentals underpinning the region," he added.

"We will also be repositioning the

profession and reinventing our toolkit to take advantage of the dramatic changes sparked by the digital revolution."

Mr Tan worked at Prudential for 20 years in various roles, including as chief executive of Prudential Singapore and regional managing director of Prudential Asia.

He was also the chief executive of NTUC Income and, later, group chief executive of holding entity NTUC Enterprise.



Mr Tan Suee Chieh worked at Prudential for 20 years in various roles, and was also the chief executive of NTUC Income.

CELEBRATING
20 YEARS OF GIFTS & PREMIUMS SOURCING

SGPFair
Singapore Gifts & Premiums Fair 2019
www.SGPFair.com

10.11.12 JULY 2019
MARINA BAY SANDS, SINGAPORE

74% of SGPFair buyers are decision-makers or directly involved in the decision-making process.

78% only attend SGPFair (out of other same-industry shows)

BOOK YOUR BOOTH NOW!

ORGANISED BY
BIZLINK
Exhibition Services Pte Ltd
A SUBSIDIARY OF sph

(65) 6848 5938 | SGPFair@bizlink.com.sg
SingaporeGiftsAndPremiumsFair | bizlink.xhbt
#Celebrate20SGPFair19 #GOP2019

S-Reits
stand to gain
this year as
markets turn
in their favour

Analysts cite dovish Fed, volatility and tighter supply in commercial, hospitality sectors

Today in **THE BUSINESS TIMES**
A publication of sph

CAUTIONARY NOTICE

We, Unigold International Pte Ltd, a company incorporated in Singapore, having a registered address at 2 Little Road Singapore 536981, are the registered proprietors of the following trade marks in Singapore:-

No.	Trade Mark No.	Trade Mark	Class
1.	T04/05055D	UNIGOLD	14
2.	T04/05057J	UNIGOLD	35
3.	T04/05060J	UG	14
4.	T04/05061I	UG	35

(hereinafter referred to as the Unigold Trade Marks)

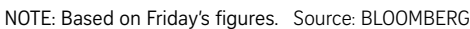
This Notice is to inform the public at large that we are not related to Unigold Global Marketplace Pte Ltd, of 8 Marina View, #07-04 Asia Square Tower 1, Singapore 018960 and that the goods and services provided via the website <https://unigold.com> do not originate from us. Further, **TAKE NOTICE** that in the event of any infringement or passing-off of the above Unigold Trade Marks, we will not hesitate to take prompt legal action to safeguard our rights.

We have taken great care to monitor and regulate the use of the Unigold Trade Marks. No other company or individual may use the Unigold Trade Marks unless they have our express written authorisation or licence to do so.

தமிழ் முரசு

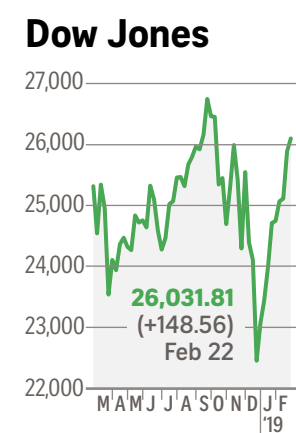
To subscribe to Tamil Murasu
call 6388 3838

Youth page
Self-defence for girls



Shows the stocks with the highest combination of price change and of daily activity relative to the three-month average volume

52-Week		Counter	Last Sale	+/-	Vol ('000)	Last Quote	
High	Low					Buy	Sell
116.9	110	ABF 5G Bond ETF	113.6	+0.1	499	113.5	113.6
93.8	82.5	CIMB APAC Div US\$	US88.8			91.6	92.4
117.6	102.5	CIMB ASEAN40 US\$	US101.0	+11	3	99.8	100.6
12851	11025	GLD US\$	US1250.2	+89	47	1250.2	12530
1402	1330	IS ASIA HYG 3SD	1392.3d	+3	1	1387	1401
1070	970	IS ASIA HYG 5SD	US1072.3d	+4	16	1024	1035
1057	1002	IS ASIA END US\$	US1054.2cd	+1	1041	1041	1049
1016	950	IS ASIA 2Y US\$	US21.7d	+7	250	918	921
103.9	94.4	Lion-Phillip S-REIT	103.8	+0.8	1493	103.6	104
375	302	Nikko AMST1ETF	334	+4	1310	334	335
100	96.8	NikkoAM SGD Bond ETF	100.4	+0.1	734	100.1	100.4
86.6	75.3	Nikko AM S-REIT US\$	US86			75.3	76.8
148.2	104.7	Nikko AM S-Asia REIT	119	+13	407	118.9	119.3
107.2	99	SING-INTC	106.8	+0.8	140	106.5	110
130	93.2	PHIL AP Div Reit US\$	US105	+0.8	112	104.9	105.4
365.8	300	STI	327	+108	8	326.5	327.4
416.4	337.3	XT ASX200 US\$	US382.2	+50	0		
685.5	375.1	XT M5BRazUS\$	US513.1			520.7	526.1
2090	1470	XT MSCZINA US\$	US1765	+70	38		2000
6111	6252	XT M5Kore US\$	US7002				
204.4	154.9	XT MSPHILS US\$	US190	+0.6	29	184	197
63.4	53.0	XT MSPacXp US\$	US567	+12	1	610	619
2034	2532	XT MStaiwan US\$	US264.0			262.4	
321.5	421.0	XT SGO20 US\$	US509.2				
404.4	285.0	XT Vietnam US\$	US340.3	+283	9	333.1	341.0



	CLOSE	UP	%	52whigh/low
JSH USD	4028	2231	4.3	4078/3155
JMH USD	7121	94.7	1.0	7205/1099
SIA	1017	41.0	4.2	1184/914
Jardine C&C	2764	34.0	0.9	3819/2669
SEVAK	371	29.0	8.5	408/210

	CLOSE	%	UP	BY PERCENTAGE
				52w high/low
P5 Capital.....	2.8	250.0	2.0	3/0.3
AnAn Intl.....	0.5	150.0	0.3	8/0.1
LionGold.....	0.2	100.0	0.1	0.2/0.1
Luzhou Bio-Chem.....	2	100.0	1.0	32/0.9
JCG Investment.....	0.3	50.0	0.1	0.4/0.1

	CLOSE	DOWN	%	52w high/low
Best World	271	-54.0	-16.6	333/115
Great Eastern	2634	-46.0	-1.7	3160/2430
Creative	480	-14.0	-2.8	1000/148
Isetan	338	-14.0	-4.0	395/330
CityDev	928	-13.0	-1.4	1359/780

		BY PERCENTAGE		
	CLOSE	%	DOWN	52w high/low
RHT HealthTrust	1.4	-63.2	-2.4	81/13.3
Mary Chia	3.9	-60.6	-6.0	9.9/2.2
NauticaWT	0.9	-55.0	-1.1	3.0/0.9
Pavilion	1.7	-51.4	-1.8	4.5/0.9
Pine Cap	0.1	-50.0	-0.1	0.3/0.1

	VOLUME		VALUE (\$)
RHT HealthTrust	235,028,000	DBS BRP	555,312,000
Genting Sing.	187,338,100	OCCB Bank	305,899,957
Rex Int'l	172,193,300	UOB	297,797,728
Exxon	158,096,100	UOB Medical	228,474,271
Exxon Medical	141,568,500	Genting Sing	204,284,925
ThaiBev	134,489,200	Capita Land	165,950,500
Y21 Shiping SGD	99,775,300	Ascendas Reit	148,288,337
Golden Agri-Res	92,224,400	Y21 Shiping SGD	142,298,793
Mapleson Lee	80,410,800	Sembcorp Marine	124,381,834
Singtel	75,577,100	Mapleson Lee Tr	111,358,198

MARKET VOLUME.....	6,719,164,000	MARKET VALUE	4,991,344,000
--------------------	---------------	--------------------	---------------

Feb 22

GOVERNMENT BONDS						
Period	Issue code	Coupon rate (%)	Maturity	Close Bid	High	Day's Low
2-Year	NY05100N	3.250%	01-Sep-20	101.93	101.95	101.95
5-Year	N51910A	2.600%	01-Feb-24	100.00	100.08	100.02
10-Year	NX1810A	2.625%	01-May-28	103.8	104.00	104.00
15-Year	NZ1310V	3.375%	01-Sep-33	111.98	112.35	112.10
20-Year	NX1810V	2.250%	01-Aug-36	97.33	97.55	97.33
30-Year	NA1610H	2.750%	01-Mar-46	103.26	0.00	0.00

Note: Based on latest issue

Source: Monetary Authority of Singapore

Note: Based on latest issue

Source: Monetary Authority of Singapore

Company	Last Sale	+or-	Vol ('000)
CapMailTrb3.08%21022	1015	unch	41
CityDev NCPCS	113	+3	4
DBS Bk 4.7%NCPS	10490	-10	4
FP Trsta 3.65%an220522	1017	+0.5	145
Hyfltra 6%CP5	6537	susp	-
UE Pref	190	-	-

	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	SETT	VOL	Feb 22 OP/INT
FTSE CHINA A50 INDEX FUTURES						
Feb19	11882.50	12042.50	11720.00	12022.50	601582	881437
Mar19	11895.00	12070.00	11747.50	12052.50	286635	133807
NIKKEI 225 INDEX FUTURES						
Mar19	21440.00	21480.00	21315.00	21395.00	57706	169860
Jun19	21275.00	21285.00	21190.00	21220.00	192	2457
MSCI TAIWAN INDEX FUTURES						
Feb19	379.00	379.70	376.40	378.90	163653	157175
Mar19	379.00	380.00	376.00	379.30	130926	70679
CNX NIFTY INDEX FUTURES						
Feb19	10808.00	10825.00	10766.00	10807.00	38235	208049
Mar19	10844.00	10859.50	10813.50	10849.50	2065	734
MSCI SINGAPORE INDEX FUTURES						
Feb19	366.20	367.60	362.40	363.80	74534	140505
Mar19	367.15	368.15	362.90	364.45	60616	7005

* Denotes an Opening Range has been established [Spare Exchange Derivatives Clearing Ltd \(Co Reg No 200005587M\)](#)

* Denotes an Opening Range has been established S'pore Exchange Derivatives Clearing Ltd (Co Reg No 200005878M)

Readers may refer to **www.sqx.com** for updated prices.



FOR BOOKINGS AND ENQUIRIES
1800-289-9988 or 6319-5192

OBITUARIES



LEE CHUI TIOK

Age : 96

passed away peacefully on 24 February 2019
Dearly missed and fondly remembered by loved ones.

Husband: Au Han Khoo (Deceased)

Sons:

Au Cheng Boon (Deceased)
Au Cheng Soon
Au Cheng Teck
Aw Cheng Hok
Au Cheng Leong, Kevin

Daughters-in-law:

Tan Ah Hong
Tan Cha Boo
Soh Yan Ngoh
Teo Gek Ching, Josephine
Hong Chuay Har, Audrey

Daughters:

Au Lay Suan
Au Lay Eng, Fiona
Au Lay Geok, Michelle

Sons-in-law:

Sim Eng Mong
Kok Chee Chuen, Benny
Willy Tan

Grandchildren:

Au Choon Siong, Melvin
Au Beng Choo, Emily
Au Meng Hui, Anna
Au Yeow Hwee
Au Beng Beng
Au Beng Guat
Hu Weijian
Au Wei Keong
Aw Weilun
Aw Jialing
Aw Jiali
Au Yi Xian
Au Yong Hsien, Ray
Sim Yeow Chong, Sebastian
Sim Huiming, Crystal
Kok Kai En
Kok Kai Shi, Maeve
Tan Yi Chang, Llewelyn
Tan Yi Rong, Llewellyn
Tan Yi Xing, Gwendolyn
Khin Moe Wai Ag

Spouses:

Chung Yee Wah, Grace
Tan Cheng Hock, Tony
Lim Hock Ann, Jack
Lee Hian Kun

Ngiam Seng Quee

Lee Fang Jun, Jody

13 great grandchildren, all relatives and friends

Wake is held at Blk 22 Haig Road, S'pore 430022
Cortege will leave on Thursday, 28 February 2019 at
1.05pm for Mandai Crematorium Hall 1
for cremation at 2.05pm



Gurmet Singh Kang

Age: 58

Passed away peacefully at home on 24 February 2019.
An angel sent among us.
You will always be in the hearts and souls of your family.

Parents:

Late Jagraj Singh Kang & Surjit Kaur

Wife:

Dalbir Kaur

Children:

Sanveen Kang, Neshveen Kang, Meveen Kang,
Sunny Sadhnani, Sukmeet Singh Warring and Bella

Siblings:

Satwant Singh, Sukhdial Kaur,
Inderjeet Singh and Dewinder Kaur

Brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews,
relatives and friends.

Buses will leave Khalsa Dharmak Sabha on
Tuesday 26 February 2019 at 5.00pm for cremation
at Mandai Crematorium Hall 4 at 6.00pm.

Akhand Path commences at Khalsa Dharmak Sabha
on Thursday 28 February 2019 at 11.00am.
Path Da Bhog and Kirtan will be held on
Saturday 2 March 2019 from 11.00am to 1.00pm.

For further information,
contact Manjit - 8121 4405 / Sunny - 9168 0760



TAN LIAN WAH

Age : 93

passed away peacefully on 23 February 2019
leaving behind loved ones.

Son:

Chee Guat Teck Ronald

Daughter-in-law:

Low Lay Kuan Jean

Daughter:

Shirley Ee Gek Neo

Son-in-law:

Robert Tan A Tjeng

Grandsons:

Chee Choon Meng Edwin
Chee Choon Xiong Melvin
Reyner Tan Kwang Ming
Sherman Tan Kwang Liang

Grandaughters-in-law:

Nguyen Thi Kim Yen

Granddaughter:

Chee Huiling Michelle

Grandson-in-law:

Pang Khia Tun Nicholas

Great Grandchildren:

Chee Ly Kiet, Chee Gia Gia, Melody Pang
Matthias Pang, Lerrae Tan, Ryler Tan, Olivia Tan
and all relatives

Wake is held at Blk 143A Rivervale Dr S'pore 541143

Cortege will leave on 27 Feb 2019 (Wed) at 8.30am for
Phor Kark See (Bright Hill Temple)
Crematorium for cremation at 9.30am

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of
my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Psalm 23:6



MARYANN LIE HOA TJEN@HARIANA SADELI

Age : 60

was called home to be with the Lord on 24 February 2019,
dearly missed by loved ones.

Husband: Jerome Han Seck Kwang

Sons:

Nicholas Han Huanchou
Timothy Han Guohuan

Daughter-in-law:

Estella Lim Lay Koon

Daughter:

Samantha Han Meiling
mother, father-in-law, siblings, nephews, nieces,
grandnephews, relatives and friends.

Wake is held at Blk 443, Sin Ming Ave S'pore 570443
Tel: 91901665, 91164446

Cortege will leave on 28 February 2019 (Thursday),
at 8.30am for funeral mass at Church of the Holy Spirit
248 Upper Thomson Rd at 9am and thereafter for
Mandai Crematorium Hall 1 for cremation at 10.45am.

"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Psalm 23:6



Chern Wee Ling 陈慧麟

Age: 85

Was called home to be with the Lord on 24 February 2019.

Dearly missed and fondly remembered by loved ones.

Wife:

Tan Yeow Tiang

Daughters and Son-in-law:

Chern Pei Pei and Chern Pei Joo & Lee Keng Hon

Grandsons:

Ryan Lee Ren Jie and Ethan Lee En Jie

And all relatives and friends.

Wake is held at 30 Prince of Wales Road, Singapore 266982.

Memorial service on Wednesday 27 February 2019 at 8.00pm.

Cortege leaves on Thursday 28 February 2019 at 9.45am
for Mandai Crematorium Hall 4 for cremation at 10.45am.

Share
the message of
farewell with
loved ones & friends



Download the free
ST Classifieds App.
Tap on "Obituaries"
within the App.



You can search for notices
published in the last 30 days
and share it via email,
SMS or social media.

STClassifieds

Guided by Compassion and Respect for All



OUR PROMISE

We practice fair and transparent pricing that
caters to your budget and needs. Contact us
anytime and we will always do our best for you.

OUR SERVICES

- Will Writing
- Grief Counselling
- Repatriation
- Imported Caskets
- Memorial Hall
- Funeral Packages from \$4,999
- Personalised Funerals
- Pro-bono Funerals
- State Funerals

Funeral Services 郑海船 生命礼仪
Direct

127 Lavender Street
Singapore 338735

info@directfuneral.com.sg
www.directfuneral.com.sg

24-HOUR HELPLINE +65 6555 1115



新加坡殡仪馆
SINGAPORE CASKET CO (PTE) LTD
131 Lavender Street Singapore 338737 www.singaporecasket.com.sg

Newly Renovated Parlours Are Open For Booking



- Parlour and Tentage service available (HDB void deck & open space)
- One-stop Funeral Services for all religions within your budget
- Homeland Journey - Worldwide Repatriation with minimal waiting time
- Final Resting Place - Luxury Columbarium Niche

New E-Class Mercedes Hearse



+65 6293 4388
24-Hours Hotline

Find today's obituaries online

Death announcements in The Straits Times are now digitised to make it easier for the deceased's next-of-kin to share news of the demise of their loved one.

Find the online version of the obituaries published today at: www.obits.sg/today or scan the QR code.

To enquire about this service, please contact +65 6319 5192.



With Deepest Sympathy & Heartfelt Condolences to
Our Managing Director, Mr Loh Hong Leong
Our Director, Mdm Lian Lay Leng
on the demise of his beloved mother / her beloved mother-in-law



MDM WONG LAN SANG
on 23 February 2019

From
Management & Staff of
Global Energy Group of Companies:
Global Energy International Ltd
Global Energy Trading Pte Ltd
Global Energy Overseas Pte Ltd
Global Marine Logistics Pte Ltd
Stellar Shipmanagement Services Pte Ltd



WONG LAN SANG
Age: 91

passed away peacefully on 23 February 2019
Dearly missed and fondly remembered by loved ones.

Husband: Loh Seow Kit (Deceased)

Sons:
Loh Hong Leong
Loh Hong Hoo

Daughters:
Loh Soon (deceased)
Loh Quey (deceased)
Loh Hong Mei
Loh Yin Angela
Loh Poh

Grandchildren:
Vance Loh Yeda
Wayne Loh Yelei
Kenneth Loh Ye Fa
Leonard Loh Ye Zhan
Vincent Ho Sheng Haw
Angie Ho Sheng Yee
Angie Ham Wee Fen
Alan Ham Peng Chen
Tan Hoe Chun
Tan Raw Shih
Rachel Natalene Toh
Randell Emmanuel Toh
Joseph Chia Jay Min
Josiah Chia Jin Min
Joy Chia Ming Ming

Great Grandchildren:
Nadia Ho Yuan Tong, Xavier Ho Yuan Xian, Alexis Tan Xin Yi, Alexia Tan Zhi Xuan
Ryan Yeo, Glenn Ham, Gwen Ham, Glenda Ham
Reyes Chia Jun Yi, Raelanne Chia En Qi, Rachelle Chia En Xuan

And all relatives and friends

Wake is held at Blk 119 Ang Mo Kio Ave 3 S'pore 560119
Cortege will leave on Wednesday, 27 February 2019 at 1.30pm
for burial at Chua Chu Kang Cemetery

Daughters-in-law:
Lian Lay Leng
Ng Lay Eng

Sons-in-law:
Ho See Hoo
Ham Kow Chit

Peter Toh
Chia Swee Chuan

Spouses:

Samantha Yew Shu Yi

Nokkaew Thammachat
Aaron Tan T'iong Bing
Gerald Yeo Lee Chuan
Soh Hwee Peng
Yeow Ee Lin, Elaine
Jimmy Chia Chieh Lun



BAY YEW HOCK
Age: 84

passed away peacefully on 23 February 2019
leaving behind loved ones.

Wife: Siew Tiam Yu (deceased)

Sons:
Bay Put Hai
Bay Piah Sin

Daughters:
Bay Siew Jee
Bay Quee Geok

Daughter-in-law:
Chee Nyet Kuen, Sharon

8 Grandchildren and all relatives.

Wake is held at 346 Balestier Road Ritz Mansions
S'pore 329776. Tel: 98396038

Cortege will leave on 27 February 2019
(Wednesday), at 4.30pm for
Mandai Crematorium Hall 4
for cremation at 5.45pm.

"I have fought the good
fight, I have finished the
race, I have kept the faith."
2 Timothy 4:7



SUSAN SUNG KIM ENG
1956 - 2019

was called home to be with
the Lord on 24 Feb 2019,
dearly missed by loved ones.

Husband: Gary Gan

Son: Samuel Gan

Daughter: Cynthia Gan

Siblings, nephews, nieces,
relatives and friends.

Wake is held at Church of
Our Lady of Lourdes

50, Ophir Rd.
Tel: 96475095

Funeral mass on 28 Feb 2019

(Thur) at Church at 2.45pm

and thereafter Cortege will
leave for Choa Chu Kang

Christian Cemetery
for burial.

Athma Shanthy Pooja
The Family of the Late



Mr Murugaian
Gunasegaran
(Thomas)

(Baker Hughes) (Founder of
SMT Sri Periyachi Pillaigal)

Departed on 13 February 2019

Wish to express their heartfelt thanks
and appreciation to all relatives and
friends for their support during their
recent bereavement.

Karumathi Prayers will be held on
the night of Tuesday 26 February
2019 at Block 666 Yishun Avenue 4,
#11-155, Singapore 760666

Athma Shanthy Prayers will be held
on Wednesday 27 February 2019 at
7.30pm at Sri Mariamman Temple,
242 South Bridge Road,
Singapore 058791

Please treat this as
a personal invitation.

Tel: 8222 4704 (Vijay Boy)



Pavadai Chandr Segaran

Ex-SAF, Staff Sergeant, Chief Clerk - Engineers
Age: 68

Passed away peacefully on 23 February 2019.
Dearly missed and fondly remembered by loved ones.

Wife: Saroja

Children & Spouses: Bharathi, Shasikumaran & M Losiny
and Sathya Anantha & Nicole Lim

Siblings, in-laws, grandchildren, nephews, nieces,
all relatives and friends.

Appa is resting at Block 104 Teck Whye Lane #04-450,
Singapore 680104. Tel: 8692 9209 / 8783 5920

Cortege leaves on Monday 25 February 2019 at 4.00pm for
Mandai Crematorium Hall 1 for cremation at 5.00pm.



TONG KAHM CHEE
passed away peacefully on
23 February 2019.

Dearly missed and fondly
remembered by loved ones:

Wife: Irene Teoh Choon Ghee

Son: Derek Tong Chak Wai

Godson: Adrian Teoh Guan Fong

Daughter: Cathlyn Tong Foong Yee

and all relatives and friends.

Wake is held at
Elizabeth Dr Singapore

(Behind property show flats
and next to Hillview
Community Club)

Cortege will leave on
Wednesday

27 February 2019 at 5.00pm
for Mandai Crematorium
Hall 2 for cremation at 5.00pm.

Obituaries

For enquiries,
call

1800-289-9988
(weekdays 8.30am
to 6.30pm)

6319-5192

"In memoriam"
is for the loved
ones whom you
remember...



stClassifieds

SPORT

3

CONSECUTIVE STRAITS CUPS THE SINGAPORE SLINGERS HAVE WON C8



Jesse Lingard attempting to round Liverpool's Alisson, but was ultimately thwarted by the goalkeeper. It was Manchester United's clearest opportunity of note, as the two sides played out a goal-less stalemate yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

BigMatch

MISSED CHANCE FOR REDS

Liverpool fail to take advantage of United's injuries with a muted display at Old Trafford

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Manchester United 0
Liverpool 0

Richard Jolly

It is rare that a draw at Old Trafford should feel so disappointing to visitors.

Liverpool reclaimed the lead of the Premier League and may have cleared the biggest hurdle separating them from a long-awaited 19th title, yet it felt an anti-climax.

A stalemate represented a missed opportunity. A depleted Manches-

ter United were not defeated. Ravaged by injury, they nevertheless salvaged a point.

It was scarcely the most brutal game between fierce rivals, but there were plenty of casualties.

The first half contained more substitutions than shots on target.

United made a strange sort of history as they became the first team since 2015 to make all three changes before the break in the Premier League.

A semi-fit Marcus Rashford had to limp through the rest of the game and Romelu Lukaku was required to track back as an ersatz right winger, but a display of determina-

tion meant Ole Gunnar Solskjaer maintained his unbeaten record against English opponents.

Under the circumstances, it felt an indictment of Liverpool.

They had possession and territorial advantage, but they lacked creativity and the final ball.

They did not draw a difficult save from David de Gea as Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane were utterly ineffectual. Roberto Firmino, who also had to be replaced in the opening half, could at least be spared the blame for Liverpool's impotence.

Their game plan did not come off. Solskjaer's seemed in ruin as United lost three midfielders in the space of 45 minutes; four in little over a day, as Nemanja Matic had been ruled out for several weeks on Saturday.

His midfield bore an unfamiliar look with the callow understudies

POINT GAINED

A clean sheet is pleasing because it's not an easy place to come. We didn't get many chances and disappointed not to win the game. Hopefully, it's a good point come the end of the season.



JAMES MILNER, Liverpool utility player, after his side earned a share of the spoils.

Scott McTominay and Andreas Pereira were paired after Ander Herrera and Juan Mata went off.

If that double blow seemed alleviated by Jesse Lingard's swift return, the substitute himself had to be substituted when his comeback backfired.

He had injured himself in the process of squandering the best chance. Lingard raced on to Lukaku's penetrative pass. He attempted to dribble around Alisson and the goalkeeper stuck out his left hand to claim the ball.

Coming in a game of this magnitude and at a ground where past Liverpool goalkeepers have struggled, it epitomised why the Reds spent £65 million (\$115 million) on the Brazilian.

United did beat him once, albeit via a Liverpool boot, but Joel Matip

was spared an own goal as Chris Smalling was ruled offside when he centred.

It was closer than Liverpool came. They managed a solitary effort on target.

Perhaps Klopp was wrong to opt for Daniel Sturridge ahead of Xherdan Shaqiri, December's match-winner against United, when Firmino went off but the Swiss and Divock Origi eventually came on.

United still held on to increase Manchester City's chances of retaining their title.

In another match, Arsenal moved back into the top four with a 2-0 victory over Southampton, thanks to two first-half goals from Alexandre Lacazette and Henrikh Mkhitaryan.

stsports@sph.com.sg

FOUR-DIGIT DRAW

Feb 24 2019

FIRST ♦ 7202
SECOND ♦ 5033
THIRD ♦ 2514

STARTERS

0649 1094 2242
3080 4399 5144
6354 6532 6810
7244

CONSOLATIONS

0190 0584 1089
1223 2223 3653
4120 6215 6859
8343

Call 6289 8822
or e-mail
notices@sph.com.sg
to place your
Change of
Address Notices

Moment to remember



From left: Liverpool fans James Linus, Isabelle Linus, Gabrielle Joseph, Anabelle Linus, former Liverpool goalkeeper David James, Udabelle Linus, ex-Manchester United defender Mikael Silvestre and Vanessa Tiffany pose for a group shot. They were among 350 fans who turned up at Clarke Quay for the live screening, presented by Chang Beer and organised by Singtel, of the English Premier League game between the Red Devils and the Reds. The match ended 0-0.

ST PHOTO: DESMOND WEE

STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Liverpool	27	20	6	1	59	15	66
2 Man City	27	21	2	4	74	20	65
3 Tottenham	27	20	0	7	55	27	60
4 Arsenal	27	16	5	6	55	37	53
5 Man United	27	15	7	5	52	35	52
6 Chelsea	26	15	5	6	45	29	50
7 Watford	27	11	7	9	39	35	40
8 Wolverhampton	27	11	7	9	35	34	40
9 West Ham	27	10	6	11	35	40	36
10 Bournemouth	27	10	4	13	38	48	34
11 Everton	27	9	6	12	36	39	33
12 Leicester	27	9	5	13	32	38	32
13 Crystal Palace	27	8	6	13	31	35	30
14 Burnley	27	8	6	13	31	48	30
15 Newcastle	27	7	7	13	24	34	28
16 Brighton	26	7	6	13	28	39	27
17 Cardiff	27	7	4	16	25	52	25
18 Southampton	27	5	9	13	28	46	24
19 Fulham	27	4	5	18	26	61	17
20 Huddersfield	27	2	5	20	14	50	11

CLUB EMPLOYEE ON CBT CHARGE

Female admin assistant in Hougang United accused of taking \$278,200 from clubhouse

David Lee

A female employee from Singapore Premier League (SPL) club Hougang United has been arrested and charged in court for having allegedly misappropriated \$278,200 from their clubhouse operations.

Admin assistant Tean Tai Tee, a 24-year-old Malaysian, was charged in court on Dec 16 last year with one count of criminal breach of trust (CBT) by a clerk or servant. She is said to have committed the offence between Nov 29 and Dec 11. Tean's bail was set at \$100,000 and she is due back in court on

March 12. If convicted, she can be jailed for up to 15 years, and fined. Hougang confirmed with The Straits Times a police report was made on the day of the incident, but declined further comment. A Football Association of Singapore spokesman said: "The FAS is aware of this matter, and had raised various inquiries with the club. "A police report had been made, and the police have also arrested a club staff in connection with this matter. As the matter is currently

under police investigation, we will not be able to comment further." Currently, six of nine Singapore Premier League clubs – Hougang, Albirex Niigata, Balestier Khalsa, Geylang International, Home United and Warriors FC – run jackpot-machine operations at their respective clubhouses. Depending on the size of their clubhouse operations, they typically hold a few hundred thousand dollars in cash for winner payouts. In recent years, the Government

has tightened the guidelines on operators of jackpot machines. According to a statement from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in 2017, seven clubs that did not meet the criteria to operate fruit machines were given six-month interim permits to wind down their jackpot operations by the end of April last year. These included former S-League (now rebranded as Singapore Premier League) clubs Gombak United and Tanjong Pagar United.

SPL clubs have had to abide by new rules that include shorter opening hours and stricter membership regulation. From last December, they also had to remove some machines from their clubhouses, as part of the MHA's move to further reduce the number of such machines in the country. The first reduction took place last November and clubs can have up to 15 machines by this November.

davidlee@sph.com.sg



Wilfried Zaha scoring the second goal for Crystal Palace who beat Leicester 4-1 on Saturday. The Foxes dismissed manager Claude Puel after the club's fourth straight home loss. PHOTO: REUTERS

Leicester axe Puel, target Rodgers as successor

LONDON • Leicester City yesterday sacked manager Claude Puel after their 4-1 Premier League home thrashing by Crystal Palace on Saturday and want to appoint Celtic's Brendan Rodgers as his successor. The club are expected to make an immediate attempt to lure the Ulsterman, but are prepared to wait until the summer for the former Liverpool boss. It is uncertain whether Rodgers would want to leave Celtic mid-season when he has the chance to win an unprecedented third treble in three seasons at Parkhead. They could also consider Newcastle's Rafael Benitez, whose contract expires in June, but they have

made Rodgers their first-choice target after some months of succession planning. While the hope had been that Puel could continue until the end of this season, the heavy defeat prompted the club's hierarchy to act, dispensing with their third manager in 23 months. It was the team's fourth straight loss at the King Power Stadium, and they have been beaten six times and held once in seven games since New Year's Day. The 57-year-old Frenchman took over from Craig Shakespeare in October 2017 on a three-year deal and the club finished ninth in his first season.

6
Losses out of seven games (1D, 6L)
Leicester have suffered under Claude Puel's watch since New Year's Day.

An official statement read: "The club would like to thank Claude for his efforts in leading the team during his 16 months in the role and wish him well in his future career." Jacky Bonnevay, Puel's assistant, has also left, with first-team coaches Mike Stowell and Adam Sadler placed in temporary charge, while "the club begins the process of appointing a new manager". The Foxes may try to bring in an interim manager if they get signals from Rodgers that he is willing to take over in the summer. Earlier this month, Peter Schmeichel, father of Leicester goalkeeper Kasper, said the club did not have a manager capable of get-

ting the best out of the players and indicated that his son might be looking to move on. Jamie Vardy had also been critical of Puel's style of play this term and, while the Frenchman claimed there was no rift with the forward, British media reports suggested otherwise. The 2016 league champions are 12th in the table and their season was marked by tragedy in October when then owner Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha and four other people were killed in a helicopter crash. Their next game is a league trip to 16th-placed Brighton tomorrow. REUTERS, THE GUARDIAN

'Best in the world' Messi nets his 50th hat-trick

SEVILLE • While other teams "have decisive players, we have the best in the world". Lionel Messi left the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan pitch with the praise of Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde ringing in his ears after notching his 50th career hat-trick to give the Catalan giants a commanding lead at the top of LaLiga. The Argentina forward was the inspiration behind their 4-2 comeback win at Sevilla on Saturday after the Spanish champions had twice fallen behind to strikes from Jesus Navas and Gabriel Mercado. Messi, who has struggled for form in recent weeks owing to a niggling injury, made a mockery of Sevilla's fine home record this term – they had beaten Real Madrid 3-0 in the league and Barcelona 2-0 in the first leg of their King's Cup quarter-final tie last month. "He is decisive and superlative," said Valverde, whose side added a fourth in stoppage time through Luis Suarez. "It's not just his goals... he always delivers in the right place at the right time." Pablo Machin's men are among

Messi's favourite opponents – last year, he came off the bench to score twice in two minutes and rescue a 2-2 draw from 2-0 down. The 31-year-old went one better this time and has now scored 36 times in 37 games against the Andalusian outfit, but the Barcelona talisman claimed that it "was always tough to win here". He told reporters: "We know what it is like to come to this stadium and how good Sevilla's players are, they made things very hard for us by taking the lead, but we knew how to overcome all that." Sevilla coach Machin admitted to sports website tribuna.com that his side simply had no answer to "the best player in the world, who has got our number and seems to have taken a special liking to us". Barcelona led LaLiga by 10 points ahead of last night's matches. It was Messi's 44th hat-trick for the club, with 32 coming in LaLiga, eight in the Champions League, three in the King's Cup and one in the Spanish Super Cup, while he has also nabbed six trebles for his country. REUTERS



Ousmane Dembele giving Lionel Messi a lift after the Argentinian ace equalised for Barcelona for the second time at Sevilla on Saturday. The Catalans won 4-2 and topped the standings by 10 points before last night's games. PHOTO: REUTERS

SportsWorld

Singapore's Choo is top Ironman woman

Singaporean Choo Ling Er was the top female competitor in the Ironman 70.3 Colombo in Sri Lanka yesterday. She finished the 1.9km swim, 90km bike ride and 21.1km run in 4hr 41min 40sec. The 31-year-old represented Singapore in road cycling at last year's Asian Games in Indonesia, where she finished 10th.

Mbappe youngest to set Ligue 1 goal mark

PARIS • Kylian Mbappe on Saturday became the youngest player to score 50 Ligue 1 goals after his brace in Paris Saint-Germain's 3-0 win over Nimes tightened the champions' grip on the French title. The France forward, 20, snapped the previous mark which Yannick Stopyra had held for 37 years. The league leaders, who opened the scoring through Christopher Nkunku, extended their lead over second-placed Lille to 17 points. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Smoking ban for all Tokyo Games sites

TOKYO • The Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games intends to impose a total smoking ban at Games venues next year, including the entirety of both indoor and outdoor areas of each site, the Yomiuri Shimbun has learnt. According to sources, it would be the first time for such a measure to be taken at the Summer Games. The committee's move will be in line with the wishes of the International Olympic Committee, which promotes a smoke-free Games. WASHINGTON POST

Bencic makes big leap in rankings with win

DUBAI • Belinda Bencic defeated Czech world No. 4 Petra Kvitova 6-3, 1-6, 6-2 on Saturday to win the Dubai Championships and vowed to celebrate with her first parachute jump. The Swiss' third career title will see her leap to 23rd in the new world rankings from her current spot of 45th. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LOTTERY

TOTO

Mon, 25 Feb 2019, 6.30pm Draw No. 3452/2019

Group 1 Prize **\$1,000,000** est.

Draw Venue: Singapore Pools (Private) Limited, 210 Middle Road, #01-01, Singapore 188994

No person under the age of 18 years shall be allowed to purchase a ticket or to claim any prize

LIVE: LiveWire (MBS) & LiveWire (RWS) (21 years and above)

LiveWire (Singapore Pools) (21 years and above during "Live" telecast)

S/S: SportsBuzz@Kwai (21 years and above)

PLAY RESPONSIBLY

Site Limit: National Problem Gambling Helpline: 1800-6-888-888

RCB Reg No.: 1960020205

SLINGERS MUST STAY FOCUSED: COACH NEO

Team on track for 2nd spot with third straight win but trainer warns against complacency

Laura Chia

With seven games left before the Asean Basketball League (ABL) play-offs, the Singapore Slingers are on track to achieving their goal of finishing second when they won their third consecutive game – their second-longest winning run this season – yesterday.

The Slingers beat the Malaysia Dragons 81-44 at the OCBC Arena for their second victory over their Causeway rivals in three days.

While Slingers coach Neo Beng Siang was beaming after lifting the Straits Cup – contested between the two Causeway rivals in the ABL – for the third season in a row, he warned his team against complacency before the play-offs.

“I’m definitely happy for them... but (being) second is the goal right now. We definitely can keep up the

momentum so long as we don’t get complacent,” said Neo.

“We need to keep working and doing what we’re supposed to do. Take it game by game and things will take care of themselves.”

The Slingers got off to a bright start thanks to sharp shooting by Xavier Alexander and Jerran Young, leading 23-13 after the first quarter.

The Dragons tightened their defence early in the second quarter, but the Slingers increased their attacking tempo to widen their lead to 38-25 at half-time.

The home side were excellent at both ends in the third quarter, scoring 24 points and limiting the Dragons to only nine as they extended their lead to 62-34.

After leading by a massive 37 points with 2½ minutes left to play in the fourth quarter, Neo rested his regulars and finished the game with

five local players – Delvin Goh, Lim Jun Yuan, Tay Ding Loon, Kelvin Lim and Russel Low. Lavin Raj later came on for Low.

“We were up by 30 and, while winning is good for us, I wanted to get more players some court time and experience,” said Neo.

He also praised his players for improving from their 87-76 win against the Dragons in Kuala Lumpur on Friday.

“That’s what we want: to get better and better every game. We really stepped up on defence and kept the pressure on them.

“The players stuck to the game plan and locked down on the Dragons’ imports so (Chris) Eversley

scored only six points and (Nnanna) Egwu, who scored 26 points last Friday, scored eight.”

John Fields was the Slingers’ top scorer with 28 points, followed by fellow Americans Young and Alexander with 21 points apiece. Winston Shepard led the scoring for the Dragons with 25 points.

Finishing second in the regular season will earn the Slingers home advantage in the play-offs.

With the win, the Slingers remained third in the 10-team ABL with a 12-7 record, behind the Alab Pilipinas (16-3) and the Formosa Dreamers (12-6).

On what the Slingers need to improve on, Neo said: “We had 16 turnovers today and it is still high so we have to bring that down to 10 to 12. We will also work on passing.

“I don’t think we have a chance to finish first, but we’ll definitely try our best for second.”

The Slingers will next play the CLS Knights Indonesia in Surabaya on Wednesday.

+48

Singapore Slingers’ winning margin over the Malaysia Dragons over two games.

claura@sph.com.sg



Xavier Alexander kissing the Straits Cup after the Slingers beat the Dragons 81-44, as (from left) John Fields, Delvin Goh and Jerran Young join in the celebrations. ST PHOTO: DESMOND WEE

Harden-less Rockets stay perfect against Warriors

OAKLAND • The Houston Rockets might just have the Golden State Warriors’ number this season.

Saturday’s 118-112 National Basketball Association win at the Oracle Arena was the visitors’ third in three meetings with Golden State, and it was accomplished without James Harden, who has scored 30 or more points in 32 consecutive games, the second-longest run in league history.

While the Rockets know their season will only be judged when the play-offs come around, Eric Gordon feels they are the Warriors’ “toughest opponents”.

The guard, who paced his team with 25 points, told ESPN: “We’ve got to continue playing, trying to be a championship team. They know who they are. This is another game for them, but this is a special night for us.”

Teammate Clint Capela agreed the team were ready to take the next step in their evolution, having pushed the two-time defending champions to Game 7 in the Western Conference Finals last May.

The centre, who added eight points, said: “We have a team that has a lot of potential...”

“Obviously, it’s just the regular

season. I’m not going to get fired up like last year. I’m just going to stay focused on one game at a time and thinking about the play-offs because we all know in the play-offs, it’s a different atmosphere.”

However, despite Houston pulling off the upset, Chris Paul insisted it “meant nothing”.

The guard, whose 23 points and 17 assists helped to offset Harden’s absence owing to a strained neck and the flu, added: “You can come in here and win on a Monday night in February or a Tuesday night in November or December.

“But, in the play-offs, it’s when

you’ve got to beat a team four out of seven times.

“It’s great we won tonight but, in two days, you’ll forget this. We all will.”

The Rockets (34-25) can seal the regular-season sweep against the Warriors (42-17) on March 13 in Houston.

Elsewhere, the New Orleans Pelicans got off to a hot start despite missing Anthony Davis, cruising to a 128-115 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers at the Smoothie King Centre.

The Pelicans scored 42 points in the opening quarter, the most in

any quarter this season, with their star centre rested after playing on Friday night at the Indiana Pacers.

Jrue Holiday led the hosts with 27 points, while Julius Randle scored 24 points against the team who drafted him in the first round five years ago, but did not re-sign him last summer.

LeBron James paced the Lakers with 27 points, but could not prevent the visitors from slipping further behind in the play-off race.

They are now 3½ games behind the Los Angeles Clippers for the eighth and final play-off spot in the West. REUTERS

BUSINESS END OF THE SEASON

In the play-offs, it’s when you’ve got to beat a team four out of seven times.

”

CHRIS PAUL, Houston guard, delineating the difference between regular- and post-season games

New direction for SICC



(From left) The Singapore Island Country Club (SICC) golf redevelopment and planning committee chairman Kenneth Chen, deputy chairman Tay Joo Soon, chairman Khoo Boon Hui, president Andrew Low and club captain Ivan Chua posing on the New Course yesterday. They were among more than 80 golfers and club officials who gathered at the 18th hole of the New Course for a ground-breaking ceremony after a charity golf game. Construction work will start today for a \$50 million renovation project on SICC’s New and Millennium golf courses. PHOTO: SICC

Yang wins third LPGA Thailand title

BANGKOK • South Korean golfer Amy Yang will head to this week’s HSBC Women’s World Championship in Singapore with her confidence on a high after winning the Honda LPGA Thailand for a third time in Pattaya yesterday.

The 29-year-old survived a tense three-way tie near the end of the final round to fire a seven-under 65 for a winning total of 22-under 266 at the Siam Country Club’s Pattaya Old Course.

Despite scoring a string of birdies early in the day, Yang found herself tied on 20 under at the 15th hole with Australia’s Lee Min-jee and Spain’s Carlota Ciganda.

But she took the lead with a birdie on the par-four 16th and an-



South Korean golfer Amy Yang also won the tournament in 2015 and 2013.

other birdie on the par-five 18th sealed the victory and a US\$240,000 (S\$324,000) pay cheque.

She finished one shot ahead of Lee, who shot a 66 for sole possession of second spot with a 21-under 267 total while Ciganda was third another stroke back with a 63 – the day’s joint-best score.

“I knew I was sharing the lead,

but all I tried to do was keep focusing and be patient,” said Yang, who also won the tournament in 2015 and 2013. “I am very honoured to have three wins here.”

Spaniard Ciganda admitted to having “nerves” and “adrenaline” for the last few holes, but said she was “overall very happy” with her performance.

Thailand’s world No. 1 Ariya Jutanugarn finished 14th with a final-round 70 for a 278 total.

American Michelle Wie, the defending champion for the US\$1.5 million HSBC event at the Sentosa Golf Club’s New Tanjong Course, shot a 74 to end tied for 23rd with a 282 total.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SPORT

QUICK BOUNCE IN TACTICAL VICTORY

Luis wins Super League Triathlon despite earlier flat tyre, Zaferes earns women's title

ALL'S FAIR

You work so hard for months and some bad things happen like a staple on the road. But that's racing, you can have a puncture yesterday and win today. That's sport and that's why we love it.



VINCENT LUIS, who thought his chances for the overall crown had gone after fumbling in Saturday's Eliminator race.

Nicole Chia

Vincent Luis had thought his hopes of winning the overall Super League Triathlon men's crown were "definitely gone" after a flat tyre in the first round had put him out of contention in the Eliminator race on Saturday.

But the Frenchman, who was the men's leader of the four-stop series ahead of the two-day Singapore finale, mounted a spectacular comeback yesterday to win the men's Enduro race and clinch the overall title with 107 points – just two more than his closest challenger Henri Schoeman of South Africa.

Yesterday's Enduro race at One*15 Marina featured 23 male competitors in three continuous rounds, each comprising a 300m swim, a 5km bike ride and a 1.6km run. The two slowest athletes at the end of each discipline were eliminated.

The 29-year-old Luis, who was the overall winner in three previous legs in Jersey, Malta and Mallorca, was in disbelief after his triumph as he was unsure about racing yesterday after Saturday's setback.

He said: "You work so hard for months and some bad things happen like a staple on the road."

"But that's racing, you can have a puncture yesterday and win today.



Men's Enduro race winner and overall champion Vincent Luis at a changeover. He was pushed hard by others like Jonathan Brownlee. ST PHOTO: ARIFFIN JAMAR

That's sport and that's why we love it."

Yesterday's race was a tactical one for Luis, who led for most of the final 1.6km run and finished eight seconds ahead of runner-up Jonathan Brownlee.

The Englishman, who won the Eliminator race on Saturday, was third in the overall series standings with 96 points.

Rio Olympic bronze medallist Schoeman, who finished third in the Enduro race, was pleased with his consistent performance in Singapore despite struggling with a si-

nus issue since he arrived earlier last week.

"To round out a solid second – I'm happy with that. What happened yesterday with Luis was definitely mine to lose," said the 27-year-old, who was leading throughout the Eliminator race on Saturday until a botched attempt at breaking away saw him fall to fourth.

"Jonny and Vincent made me work extremely hard."

Women's series leader Katie Zaferes was the overall champion with 113 points, despite coming in second to Cassandre Beaugrand of

France in the women's Enduro race yesterday. The latter finished third overall with 65 points, while Dutchwoman Rachel Klamer was second with 76 points.

Zaferes and Beaugrand took turns exchanging the lead in the final stretch yesterday and appeared to cross the finish line at the same time, with Beaugrand taking the win in a photo finish.

Said American Zaferes, who won the women's Eliminator on Saturday: "I'm both really happy and a little disappointed because it was so close and I gave everything I had.

"It's always nice to come out on top, but it was a good weekend, it's been a great series and I'm happy with finishing second today but first overall for the series.

"I was trying to figure out whether it was better to be at the front or better to be on her shoulder to attack, or whether to wait.

"I wasn't sure if she would be able to come with me if I attacked it and I just tried to go all the way to the finish and she obviously was right there."

cnicole@sph.com.sg

Sports School keep SPH Schools Relay overall title

Sazali Abdul Aziz

The Singapore Sports School (SSP) retained their SPH Schools Relay Championships overall crown at the Bishan Stadium yesterday.

They topped the standings at the two-day meet with 120 points, finishing ahead of Raffles Institution (RI) on 109.

Nanyang Girls' High and Dunman High shared third place after both schools finished with 59 points.

It was SSP's eighth overall title in nine years. They had regained the championship crown last year after RI snapped their six-year winning streak in 2017.

Pedro Acuna, the SSP's head coach for track and field, singled out the school's C Division relay teams for praise.

Said the Chilean: "I am happy for the team as the students worked very hard for (the win), and this is a good lead-up to the National Schools Championships (next month).

"I'm pleased with the C Division teams in general, as many of the athletes were taking part in the SPH Schools Relay for the first time, but rose to the occasion and performed well."

SSP's C Division teams contributed 63 points to their school's overall score, while their B and A Division teams picked up 45 and 12 points respectively.

Their C boys' and girls' teams triumphed in the 4x100m, 4x400m and 4x800m relays, while the boys' 4x200m team also won gold.

Only CHIJ St Nicholas Girls' School's narrow win in the 4x200m

race – they finished 0.08sec ahead second-placed SSP – prevented a clean sweep in the C Division.

No meet records were set over the two days, but the SSP's C girls 4x800m quartet came closest on Saturday. They clocked 10min 39.93sec, less than half a second shy of the 10-year-old record (10:39.50) set by CHIJ Toa Payoh Secondary School.

Clifton Dragon, SSP's assistant director of sports, said: "We are happy. This competition is part of our plans to help the student-athletes in their athlete development, and is a great way to foster teamwork and team spirit."

Now into its 27th year, the 2019 SPH Schools Relay Championships featured a total of 32 schools.

msazali@sph.com.sg



Yesterday's victory was Singapore Sports School's eighth overall title in nine years. ST PHOTO: KHALID BABA

England coach kicking himself after loss to Wales

CARDIFF • After England's kicking had destroyed France on Feb 10, Eddie Jones said he expected teams in the Six Nations rugby tournament to adjust their defending to deal with it.

However, the England head coach probably did not think the modification would occur so quickly that the approach was virtually nullified in their next game.

So, instead of chalking up a third successive convincing Six Nations victory on Saturday, England were beaten 21-13 by a Wales team, who had done little of note in their first two games, but are now looking greedily at their own Grand Slam.

Warren Gatland's players did their homework for sure and had the added benefit of British and Irish Lion Liam Williams at full-back, whereas France thought that they could get away with a non-specialist in the position.

As a result, something that worked so well at Twickenham, brought little joy in Cardiff.

The Welsh back three were confident under the rain of high kicks and the home team's positional discipline meant there was never as much space for England to thread the grubbers that had produced so many tries in their previous game.

"They beat us in the air," Jones ad-

mitted, before adding that his team would "learn from this".

It is by no means "back to the drawing board" for Jones as the visitors were powerful and impressive in many areas of the game.

But the Australian will waste little time in reminding his players that if Plan A is not working, it is probably a good idea to try Plan B – assuming there is one.

"What undid England was a lack of accuracy and a touch of tactical inertia," Lawrence Dallaglio wrote in the Times of London yesterday.

The former England captain said by the time England woke up to the fact that Wales had changed their

approach, it was too late – which will provide more "learnings" for Jones and his players this week as they prepare for their final two games against Italy and Scotland.

Victories in those two Twickenham encounters will still give England a fighting chance of winning the title, but they now need Wales to slip up in one of their last two against Scotland and Ireland.

The bigger picture for Jones, with an eye on the Sept 20-Nov 2 World Cup, is to ensure that England are more tactically nimble as their opponents in Japan will be studying the tapes of Saturday's game a lot more closely now. REUTERS

Next 48 Hours

TODAY

FOOTBALL

Spanish LaLiga Girona v Sociedad (StarHub Ch213, tomorrow, 3.55am).

TENNIS

ATP Dubai Championships Day 1 (StarHub Ch201, 6pm & 11pm). ATP Mexican Open Day 1 (Ch201, tomorrow, 6am).

TOMORROW

BASKETBALL

ABL Macau Black Bears v Zhuohai Wolf Warriors (StarHub Ch202, 7.30pm).

FOOTBALL

AFC Cup Group F: Yangon v Tampines (4.50pm). Gp G: Persija Jakarta v Bin Duong (7.20pm) – Singtel TV Ch114 & StarHub Ch208. Gp G: Ceres Negros v Shan United (Ch115 & Ch209, 7.20am). Gp F: Hanoi v NagaWorld (Ch116 & Ch210, 7.50pm).

English Premier League Newcastle v Burnley (Ch102 & Ch227, Wednesday, 4am). Leicester v Brighton (Ch103 & Ch228). Huddersfield v Wolves (Ch104 & Ch229). Cardiff v Everton (Ch105 & Ch230) – Wednesday, 3.35am

TENNIS

ATP Dubai Championships Day 2 (StarHub Ch201, 6pm & 11pm). ATP Mexican Open Day 2 (Ch201, Wednesday, 6am).

life

D CREATING A BIG BANG
Seungri debuts
solo tour
D6



THE AFTERLIFE
Play tackles big questions
about human existence
D6

Feverish child? Stay cool



It is common for children to run a temperature and this can usually be managed at home instead of rushing them to the emergency department, doctors say



Joyce Teo

If you are a parent or caregiver, you may have had the experience of rushing a feverish child to the children's emergency department of a public hospital – only to get stuck waiting your turn.

Earlier this month, Dr Jade Kua, a consultant at the emergency medicine department at KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH), wrote on her personal blog that the hospital saw many non-urgent cases of fever in the children's emergency ward during the Chinese New Year holidays.

One of the consequences is an increased waiting time for everyone, including those with urgent cases, she wrote.

"Although some should certainly be seen here, as they are very ill, many can probably wait to be seen by a family doctor," she added.

The Health Ministry did not reply by press time on average waiting times at children's emergency departments, although it is understood that a visit can easily take a few hours.

Reducing visits of non-emergency cases will naturally lead to a decrease in overcrowding, said Dr Lim Yang Chern, a consultant in the children's emergency department at National University Hospital (NUH).

While overcrowding is unlikely to affect care of children who are seriously ill as they are usually identified early, it can be a public-health concern.

For instance, a child with the common cold can pass the virus to another child who is at the emergency for a broken arm, he said.

"We have had parents bring in their pre-school children with a fever of 39 deg C at the one-hour mark of having a fever," said Dr Lim.

The fever had just occurred and, usually, a full consultation would show there were no worrisome features of severe illness, with the

most likely diagnosis being a viral fever.

Dr Kua added: "Sometimes, we see children who are brought to KKH's children's emergency department on the first day of the fever, with no symptoms other than a runny nose."

Besides the spread of viruses, Dr Lim notes that these children may have to endure a two- to three-hour wait at the children's emergency department when they could have been more comfortable staying at home, getting a good rest and be seen by the family doctor the next day.

WHEN NOT TO RUSH FOR HELP

In general, if the fever is an isolated symptom and the child is otherwise active and playing and looks well, he need not be rushed to the emergency department, said Dr Lim.

Instead, parents can seek medical attention in a non-urgent manner.

"A simple screen can be: If you take away the fever, does your child look otherwise the same as usual?" he advised.

If the fever is below 41 deg C, a high number on a thermometer does not always mean the child is sicker, said Dr Kua.

She related a recent case in which worried parents brought in their child, a pre-schooler who had a 39 deg C fever with a slight runny nose, but was otherwise eating and playing well.

Although his fever subsided after taking paracetamol, his parents took him to the hospital and asked for antibiotics or a drip, fearing the fever would rise again.

Dr Kua added: "Fever rises and falls, especially when the effect of medication wears off... A visit to the children's emergency department will not prevent this from occurring."

"If the fever is caused by a viral infection, antibiotics are of no use. If the child is eating well, a drip is not required."

In such a case, parents can seek help from their family doctor or regular paediatrician, instead of rushing to the children's emergency department, she said.

CONTINUED ON D2



ALLIUM
HEALTHCARE

Co-creating meaningful aged care experiences

We appreciate that every individual is unique, and provide personalised trusted care that is responsive to specific needs and preferences

Allium Care Studio*

Offers a range of enrichment day care programmes and other services for older persons:

- Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy
- Mental Stimulation (Dementia)
- Physical Exercises
- Community Nursing
- Geriatric Care Management
- Caregiver Training
- Home Therapy

We are among the first aged-care facilities in Asia equipped with an evidence-based, clinically tested gait treatment from Germany.



Our physiotherapists will guide you through the treatment to:

- Imitate natural walking pattern
- Enhance walking ability
- Increase gait speed
- Improve balance
- Improve endurance
- Stimulate muscle memory

(Treatment progress and outcome is unique to each individual)

Come visit us today at Allium Care Studios:

396 Joo Chiat Place #01-01 to #01-07 Singapore 428079 Tel: 6282 6905

32 Jln Kelulut (Seletar Hills) Singapore 809049 Tel: 6219 0535

✉ enquiries@alliumhealthcare.com 🌐 www.alliumhealthcare.com 📘 www.facebook.com/alliumhealthcare

We're different because you are.

When and where to seek help

FROM D1

In the emergency department, doctors will always have to attend to the sicker patients first, such as the child who is breathless, said Dr Lim.

Complicated cases that require hospitalisation, such as severe vomiting with dehydration, will also need immediate attention, added Dr Kua.

"Non-urgent cases, such as uncomplicated fever, cough and cold, can be managed by a family doctor or the child's regular paediatrician," she said.

"A generalisation is that if the child can play well, eat well, sleep well and looks well, it is less likely that he is in a critical condition."

A FEVER CAN BE A GOOD THING

A fever, which is the human body's way of fighting infection, occurs at a temperature of above 38 deg C. The medical definition of high fever is a temperature of above 41 deg C, said Dr Lim.

"Isolated fever alone often is not considered an emergency, even when it does reach 41 deg C," he said.

Yet, many parents worry when their children develop high fever, perhaps mistakenly fearing that this leads to brain damage or fits.

A small number of children aged between six months and six years old may have seizures with high fever. When this happens, do not place anything in the child's mouth.

These febrile seizures may look scary, but they are usually harmless to the child and high fevers or febrile seizures alone usually do not lead to brain damage, said doctors.

When a child has a high fever, Dr Lim said it is more important to focus on the condition causing the fever and the presence of any complications.

"Often times, the height of the fever does not consistently correlate with the severity of illness," he said.

For example, a child with a simple viral upper-respiratory infection can have a fever of up to 41 deg C.

But most children are expected to recover fully without any specific intervention, said Dr Lim.

"Conversely, a child with a chest infection may have a 'lower' fever of 38 deg C, but this illness is more serious than the child with a higher temperature but a simple viral illness."

WHEN TO SEEK URGENT HELP

When your child's fever reaches 41 deg C, the normal body process of thermo-regulation may be overwhelmed.

This is when you should take your child to the nearest children's emergency department or family doctor to be assessed immediately, said Dr Kua.

Very young children, especially those under three months, should be treated for fever at a children's emergency department as they are at a higher risk of serious bacterial infections, she added.

While fever itself is an important sign to note when considering when and where to seek help, parents should also consider other factors, such as whether the child is feeding poorly, vomiting or has new symptoms like rash.

If your child has a low-grade fever but appears unwell, dehydrated and lethargic, he should be seen in the children's emergency department.

Dr Lim said when children develop signs of dehydration and laboured breathing or become drowsy – they should be seen by a doctor early, even in the absence of fever.

Medical help should also be sought if a child's fever persists for more than five days as most viral illnesses generally resolve by the fourth day of the fever, said Dr Lim.

However, the child may not need to visit the children's emergency department for this as he can also get evaluated at a paediatric outpatient clinic or by a general practitioner, he said.

Dr Kua said: "If the child's fever persists beyond five days, we tend to be watchful of conditions like Kawasaki disease."



Kawasaki disease is a rare childhood disease that causes inflammation of the blood vessels.

"Sometimes, we also want to review the child to determine if an initial viral fever is complicated by a second bacterial infection."

That is why doctors might need to perform blood or urine tests in the

children's emergency department or even admit the child for further investigation or treatment, she said.

For instance, a young infant who has fallen ill with a "stomach flu" virus and has fever with vomiting as well as diarrhoea, can subsequently suffer from severe dehydration, which warrants prompt medical intervention, such as putting him on intravenous fluids, said Dr Lim.

Parents should monitor their child and seek help if need be, even though he has seen a doctor and is deemed fit to return home.

If the child's condition worsens at home, for instance, if he develops severe headache, neck stiffness and lethargy, his parents should return for another consultation as the illness may have evolved, said Dr Kua.

"Parents should not feel that they must stay home after being discharged by the earlier doctor. The situation may have changed," she added.

joyceteo@sph.com.sg

Manage a fever at home

Most parents worry – and many panic – when their children develop a fever.

However, fever is common in children and, usually, not serious.

You should, however, take the child to a doctor immediately if he:

- Is younger than three months old.
- Has a fever that reaches 41 deg C.
- Displays other symptoms such as poor appetite, vomiting or rash.
- Has a low-grade fever, but appears unwell, dehydrated and lethargic.
- Develops signs of dehydration and laboured breathing or becomes drowsy even in the absence of a fever.
- Has a fever that persists for more than five days.

When caring for a feverish child, take note of the following:

- Ensure the child gets plenty of fluids like water, and ones with nutrition, such as milk.
- Keep the child at home and have him stay away from over strenuous physical exertion.
- Give fever medication if needed. Paracetamol is the first line of medication that is used to manage fever. It can be used six hours apart if the fever is above 38 deg C or even four hours apart if the fever is above 38.5 deg C. When the fever is persistently above 38.5 deg C, one to two hours after paracetamol has been given, ibuprofen may be given six-hourly.

Here is what not to do:

- Avoid undressing the child and showering him with cold water to "help" bring down the fever. Doing this will provoke shivering and may worsen the fever.
- Do not cover the child with too many layers of clothing. Overdressing the child can prevent his body heat from escaping and cause his body temperature to rise.

Joyce Teo

Visit a doctor if a child's fever persists for more than five days, says Dr Lim Yang Chern, a consultant at the children's emergency department at National University Hospital.
PHOTO: ST FILE

Best Selling Joint Product Since 2014

US CLINICALS 优克利

Singapore's Leading Brand 2015-2018

刘谦益 Richard Low Mediacorp Artiste

For Strong Joints, Take StrongJoint™!

Shellfish-Free

POPULAR CHOICE AWARDS 2018

Special Promotion 15% Off
U.P.: \$65
Promo till: 24/03/2019

Individual results may vary

TARGETS 6 JOINT PROBLEMS

Joint Weakness	Stiffness	Discomfort	Swollen	Numbness	Creaking Joint
----------------	-----------	------------	---------	----------	----------------

KEY BENEFITS & INGREDIENTS:

- Support joint cartilage health: Collagen Type II
- Provide lubrication for joints: Hyaluronic Acid, Glucosamine Sulphate
- Relieve joint discomfort: MSM
- Relieve discomfort from inflammation: Boswellia Serrata
- Provide nutrients: Vitamin D, Goji Berry

Testimonials

I participate in social activities frequently, but due to swollen joint, joint discomfort and weakness, I am unable to enjoy myself. I've tried many joint care products but none worked. My friends recommended StrongJoint to me and after taking it for 2 weeks, my joints are more flexible and the discomfort subsided. My friends told me I am getting more energetic.
—Ms Song, 72, Retiree

My job requires me to walk about, carrying heavy things. After a long period of time, my joints began to hurt and it was no longer as flexible as before. Ever since I starting taking StrongJoint, my joint becomes easier!
—Mr Guo Cheng Chuan, 59, Delivery Man

My job requires me to walk around for long hours & I experienced joint ache. After consuming StrongJoint recommended by my friend, the ache gradually reduced. Recently I went to Japan for a free & easy tour. I felt that my leg is still very light even after walking for long hours. Thanks to US Clinicals StrongJoint for allowing me to have an enjoyable holiday.
—Mdm Chua, 62, Childcare Helper

Available at: **unity** **watsons**

BUY 6 GET 1 FREE*
*Applicable to all "Strong" series products except Kids Series, see box for details.

6515 9818
www.hibebau.com

GROWTH XTEND **AL 全连**

6 Essential nutrients For Teens Healthy Growth & Development

- ✓ Support healthy height growth and posture
- ✓ Support mental performance
- ✓ Support healthy immune system
- ✓ Promote healthy growth

快高长大 GROWTH XTEND

Suitable for both boys & girls from 10 years old

Our Retailers: **OG** **THE MALL** **中興** **ROBINSONS** **A&A** **METRO** **unity**

Manufacturer and Sole Distributor:
ALL LINK MEDICAL & HEALTH PRODUCTS PTE LTD
Tel: 6846 0337 • Fax: 6846 0336 • Email: info@alllinkmedical.com
BUY ONLINE at www.alllinkmedical.com

Made in Singapore **GMP**

தமிழ் முரசு

Nominations now open for the Most Inspiring Tamil Teachers' Award 2019

Forms can be downloaded at
www.tamilmurasu.com.sg
and
www.tlpc.sg

To subscribe to Tamil Murasu call 6388 3838

Fit&Fab

Workout influencer

One of Ms Claudia Phuah's friends started training to be a yoga teacher after joining her in a class

Joyce Teo

What is your secret to looking fabulous?
I don't think I look fabulous. I just try to stay healthy and fit.

Has there ever been a time when you were not fit and fab?
Yes, I was overweight when I was undergoing puberty.

I started to exercise regularly only when I was around 15 to 16 years old, and decided I enjoy working out.

What is the most extreme thing you have done in the name of fitness?

In February last year, I completed a 200-hour training course to be certified as a yoga teacher. I devoted 10 full weekends to it. Training started at 8am and ended at 7pm. It was intense.

I signed up for the course because I wanted to take my yoga training to the next level. I felt that it was coming to a standstill after having practised yoga for a couple of years. The course was tiring, but absolutely worth it.

What is your diet like?

I love my proteins and I dislike carbs, so I would try to eat less carbs

and more chicken, beef, seafood and eggs.

What are your indulgences?
Chocolates. I can eat M&Ms all day.

What are the three most important things in your life?
Family, friends and health.

What is your favourite and least favourite part of your body?
My legs. My least favourite part is the area around my hips.

What are your must-dos before and after a workout?
Stretching, as this helps to loosen my muscles, improve my flexibility and prevent severe muscle aches after an intense workout.

How important is it for you to keep up with your fitness routine?

On a scale of one to 10, I will rank it an eight. For me, exercising not only helps me to stay fit physically, but it also strengthens my mental health.

As my work can be demanding and there have been occasions where I had to miss my exercise sessions, I now try to plan my fitness schedule ahead of time.

If I know there's a chance I have to work late, I will usually exercise before work or during lunchtime. It is always hard to exercise after you've had a long day at work.

What do you like about fitness?

Fitness is a big part of my life and I use it to bond with the people around me.

My colleagues and I run together on a regular basis. We run at our



Ms Claudia Phuah was the female champion of the 5.6km race at last year's JP Morgan Corporate Challenge Singapore event. ST PHOTO: DESMOND WEE

own pace, but always make it a point to start the run together and congregate when we finish. This has helped my department to bond and encourage the rest of the office to start running if they haven't already done so.

How has your active lifestyle influenced your family and friends?

I run, swim and go for yoga classes

with my husband.

I also run or do yoga with my friends. A close friend of mine joined me for yoga classes, fell in love with yoga and is going through the training to become a yoga teacher. I am so proud of what she has managed to accomplish.

How extensive is your collection of sports-related paraphernalia?

I have one yoga mat and a pair of

boxing gloves. I do not own any special exercise equipment.

Would you go for plastic surgery?

No.

Do you think you're sexy?

I don't think so.

joyceteo@sph.com.sg

Fitness routine

Monday	• 30min run • 1hr boxing or high-intensity interval training
Tuesday	• 30min run • 1hr yoga
Wednesday	• 30min run • 1hr boxing or high-intensity interval training
Thursday	• 30min run • 1hr yoga
Friday	• Rest
Saturday	• 30min run • 45min swim
Sunday	• 30min run • 1hr yoga

Source: CLAUDIA PHUAH
STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

BioBox

CLAUDIA PHUAH

AGE: 28

HEIGHT: 1.62m

WEIGHT: 48kg

The overweight teenager started to run while waiting for her A-level results and got hooked. She also decided to swim regularly.

About five years ago, she picked up yoga as well. Ms Phuah has been honing her yoga skills and even completed a teacher training course last year.

She is motivated to stay healthy, slim and fit with a routine that also includes high-intensity interval training as well as boxing, which she picked up six months ago.

Exercise is an activity the JP Morgan finance executive enjoys doing with her husband George Koh, 33, her friends and colleagues.

She is training for the JP Morgan Corporate Challenge Singapore event on March 28. She was the female champion of the 5.6km race last year where she finished in 26 minutes and 24 seconds.

ASK THE EXPERTS

sweetspot
Partner Content

Brought to you by


Dealing with back pain



PHOTO: ISTOCK

Q I am 46 years old and keep getting back pain recently. What are the common causes and what should I do about it?

A The spine is made up of many small bones, called vertebrae, which are stacked on top of one another and held together by ligaments and muscles. In between each vertebra is a soft, gel-like cushion called a disc.

The spine holds the body upright and provides mobility for daily activities such as bending, twisting and lifting. Over time, these everyday stresses will cause wear and tear of the spinal structures.

What are the causes of back pain?

Back pain could be caused by degeneration or injury of the spine: **■ Degeneration:** This can lead to slippage of one vertebra over another (spondylolisthesis), spinal deformity (scoliosis), nerve compression from disc protrusion (slipped disc), or the narrowing of nerve passages (spinal stenosis).

■ Diseases: These include arthritis that affects the spine (ankylosing spondylitis), tumour and infection.

■ Non-spine causes: These include abdominal and vascular (blood vessel-related) diseases.

What are the common risk factors?

They include: **■** heredity (disc quality); **■** age (from 30 to 40 onwards); **■** lack of exercise (muscle weakness); **■** being overweight; **■** diseases (arthritis, cancer

- or infection);
- smoking (poorer disc nutrition);
- bad ergonomics (poor posture, prolonged sitting, immobility);
- bad lifting techniques;
- psychological conditions; and
- osteoporosis (fragility fractures).

How do I prevent back pain?

You should:

- improve your physical condition and practise better body mechanics;
- build muscle strength and flexibility (walk, swim, do yoga or pilates);
- improve your posture;
- manage your weight;
- stop smoking; and
- maintain good bone health (eat calcium-rich food, get vitamin D from sunlight exposure, go for brisk walks).

When should I see a doctor for back pain?

Back pain may occasionally be associated with more serious conditions. See a doctor if your back pain is associated with:

- unrelenting pain at night or at rest;
- new bladder or bowel problems;
- serious injury;
- pain down one or both legs;
- weakness, numbness or tingling in one or both legs; or
- unexplained weight loss.

Fortunately, most back pain improves within one to two weeks, though some may take six to eight weeks.

If the pain is still significant af-

ter several days to a week, or does not improve after six to eight weeks, do seek medical attention.

How is back pain treated?

Most back pain responds to conservative treatment, such as rest, medications and physical therapy.

If there is no improvement, further investigations (X-rays, MRI scans or blood tests) may be required to identify the specific causes of pain.

Further treatment of pain may include spinal steroid injections and radio-frequency ablation of pain nerves.

When is surgery recommended?

Spinal surgery is mostly recommended if one has:

- persistent back pain with radiating leg pain or muscle weakness from nerve compression; or
 - structural problems such as a slipped disc or spinal stenosis that has not responded to conservative treatment.
- Your surgeon will discuss with you the specific type of surgery and risks involved.
- In elderly patients with osteoporosis and vertebral compression fractures, cement injection (vertebroplasty, kyphoplasty) may help to relieve pain and prevent vertebral collapse.

Dr Ngian Kite Seng

Specialist orthopaedic surgeon,
Mount Alvernia Hospital

ASK THE EXPERTS

sweetspot
Partner Content

Brought to you by
 A Novartis Division

Correcting cataract and presbyopia together

Q I am 61 years old and have "lao hua" (presbyopia) and cataract. I hear that both conditions can be corrected through cataract surgery. Can you tell me more about it?

A Age-related eye conditions such as cataract and presbyopia usually affect people as they reach their 40s.

What is cataract?

A cataract is a clouding of the natural lens of the eye, and is a gradual process that may begin when a person is in his mid-40s.

The early symptoms include difficulty in seeing or reading in dim light, which may be corrected by spectacles.

If the symptoms become more severe — such as seeing starbursts and halos around lights at night — then cataract surgery may be required.

What is presbyopia?

Between the ages of 40 and 45, the natural lenses of most people's eyes may also start to lose the ability to read or see up close, resulting in presbyopia (also known as age-related long-sightedness or "lao hua").

The symptoms include a feeling of "pressure" in the eyes and having to hold reading materials farther away to see them clearly.

Presbyopia can be managed by spectacles that enable one to see near objects clearly.

Those who have myopia (short-sightedness) may wear progressive spectacles that can correct vision for both far and near distance. These glasses can work quite well if correctly prescribed and fitted, but may be rather expensive.

How can cataract and presbyopia be corrected?
During cataract removal — which is a painless surgery that



PHOTO: ISTOCK

takes about 15 minutes — the cloudy lens is removed and replaced with a clear lens replacement of the correct optical power to reduce the need for wearing glasses.

There are two main types of lens implants:

■ Monofocal: It allows clear vision at only one distance. Usually the far vision is very good but the near vision tends to be blurry, so you may still need to wear glasses to see clearly.

■ Multifocal: It gives a range of clear vision from near to far, so you need not wear glasses for reading your mobile screen or driving. However, you may still need glasses for intermediate vision, such as reading a computer screen at a desk.

The newest types of multifocal lens implants (above), called trifocals, enable clear vision for three distances: intermediate computer distance in addition to near and far.

Who is suitable for it?

Patients who might benefit from multifocal lens implants during cataract surgery are those who are highly motivated to reduce

their dependence on glasses following the surgery.

A typical patient who has had trifocal lenses implanted in both eyes will likely not need glasses when driving, working at a computer or reading the small print on product labels.

While the outcome is usually very good, be mindful that there may be side effects, for example, you may see light rings (halos) around bright street lights and oncoming car headlights at night.

Usually the condition improves in the few months after surgery, but a small percentage of patients may find it more difficult to do night driving.

The key to a successful outcome of a cataract surgery is to ensure the kind of lens implant matches the patient's profile and needs, as each type has its pros and cons.

In your clinic consultation, your eye surgeon will advise if you are a suitable candidate for this type of lens implant.

Dr Christopher Khng

Consultant ophthalmologist
and medical director,
EyeWise Vision Clinic

Technology to tackle health issues

ORGANISED BY

THE STRAITS TIMES
MIND&BODY

Take charge of your health

Hear from Dr Teo Ngee, a consultant radiologist from the Singapore Medical Specialists Centre, on how to deal with pain. Also, get tips from other doctors on various health topics, including how to manage your health risks if you are overweight.



What: The Straits Times Mind & Body Health Management Seminar
When: March 30, 2019 (Saturday), 10am to 2pm
Where: Auditorium, SPH News Centre, 1000 Toa Payoh North
Fee: \$12 nett a person
(includes a goodie bag with two 1-litre packs of Marigold Peel Fresh Juice, tea break and bento lunch)

PRESENTED BY
SINGAPORE MEDICAL SPECIALISTS CENTRE

Register online at str.sg/360

Artificial intelligence and Wi-Fi are being used in new medical devices to analyse and diagnose health conditions

NEW YORK • Americans are turning to the latest tech devices for a booster shot – to prevent and detect medical problems early and avoid costly trips to the doctor's or emergency room.

Among the new inventions are many that use artificial intelligence (AI), sensors or Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity to do a host of ground-breaking tasks, from detecting Alzheimer's disease from the sound of one's voice to telling breast cancer patients, in real-time, if their chemotherapy treatment is working.

Some patients seek out new devices as if their lives depend on them. And for some, they do.

Take, for example, Mr Jeff Brue, a tech guru for Hollywood films. He was on his honeymoon in Mexico in 2016 when his spleen ruptured and he was rushed to a hospital. Upon returning home to Los Angeles, doctors wrongly diagnosed him as having angiosarcoma, a rare form of cancer, and began aggressive chemotherapy.

"They told me I had a year to live," said Mr Brue, who was then 34. Refusing to accept the prognosis, he searched the Internet for data on his symptoms and rushed pathology reports to other major hospitals for additional opinions.

A month later, doctors confirmed an error had been made and said he actually had non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, which is treatable. But by then, his immune system and liver had been damaged from the



Mr Jeff Brue, who was wrongly diagnosed as having a rare cancer, is hoping his digital storage system can help improve the healthcare sector with better quality images of scans.
PHOTO: NYTIMES

wrong chemotherapy and seven biopsies.

Now awaiting a liver transplant, he attributes much of the misdiagnosis to outdated imaging tools and poor communication between radiologists and oncologists.

He set out to try and change the system, taking his OpenDrives digital storage system, which had made him a tech rock star in the film and entertainment industry, to the healthcare sector. His system will allow hospitals to store high-resolution MRI and CT scans and other 3D images on its network, without having to compress them.

Most hospital networks compress stored images, which can make them fuzzy and potentially cause doctors to miss information.

Voice-analysis technology, which can detect mental and physical health conditions, such as coronary artery disease, Alzheimer's and sleep apnea from the sound of one's voice, is another promising area. The technology uses AI to assess hundreds of metrics – such as pitch, tone, pauses, word choices, breathing and how a person describes a photo – to spot problems.

"The manner in which we speak and the word choices we make can be evaluated to accurately detect a growing list of clinical conditions," said Mr Rich Ross, healthcare research director at research and advisory firm Gartner.

More researchers are using AI to help radiologists make more accurate diagnostic decisions, especially in the area of breast cancer.

About 41,000 women in the US died from breast cancer last year, and women have a one in eight chance of developing the ailment in their lifetime, according to the American Cancer Society.

Professor Regina Barzilay at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Ms Constance Lehman, chief of breast imaging at the department of radiology at Massachusetts General Hospital, created an AI system to better detect lesions seen on mammograms.

Current diagnostic tools make it tough to know definitively whether a lesion is high risk, benign or malignant, especially if the patient has dense breast tissue, said Prof Barzilay.

This can result in false-positive

results that lead to unnecessary biopsies and surgeries.

Her team's system uses machine learning to detect similarities between a patient's breast and a database of 70,000 images for which the malignant or benign outcome was known.

She expects that her early-detection technology, which is being used at Massachusetts General Hospital, will be tested in 10 to 15 more hospitals by the end of the year.

Another promising advance is MIT's "X-ray vision" technology, using Wi-Fi and radio waves to see through walls to monitor patients with movement disorders or those prone to falling.

Professor Dina Katabi at MIT is testing a wireless smart-home system, called Emerald, that uses AI, sensors and radio signals to track a person's movements, sleep stages, heartbeat, breathing, gait and other metrics as long as Wi-Fi is present. Basically, radio signals bounce off the body, sending the reflection onto the device's screen – in the form of a stick figure – that walks, sits, stops and moves its limbs just as the person does.

The technology is aimed at making it easy to collect health and motion data in a non-intrusive way to monitor conditions such as Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis or even sleep apnea so that doctors can adjust medications as needed.

It can detect side effects or wrong drug doses through changes in heartbeat, breathing or other metrics, and monitor falls by older people who live alone.

"Today, if you have a sleep issue and want to know how much deep sleep you're getting, you go to a sleep laboratory and they put... electrodes on your head, other sensors on your body, and then ask you to sleep like that," Prof Katabi said.

With a "smart" Wi-Fi box, all the data would be collected without the need for body sensors. NYTIMES

This page is done by SPH Marketing Division



Fight Cancer Naturally

Your body is able to develop cancer on its own, but did you know that it can also fight the symptoms of the condition by itself? With more than 40 years of clinical experience, Dr. David Tan will be facilitating an interactive forum session at the SMU Administration Building on 9 March 2019 to share techniques on how you can tame cancer symptoms naturally. You can also get to hear personal experiences from the survivors on their healing journey from cancer. The programme will also include real-time Mandarin translation (to be indicated during pre-registration), a free one-to-one consultation/enquiry session and lunch. Pre-registration is required for free admission and participants will also stand a chance to win a lucky draw prize

Date: 9 March 2019 (Saturday) **Programme:** 10am – 1pm, Registration starts at 9.45am (Door closes at 10.30am) **Venue:** SMU Administration Building (Beside NTUC Income Centre), Level 4 Event Halls 4-1 & 4-2, 81 Victoria Street, S188065, Bras Basah MRT Exit A

Should you have more queries, please contact **90918108 / 64556787**, or email to **info@biodynelabs.com**. Visit <https://www.facebook.com/tamingcancernaturally> for more information.



Mind & Body brings you a selection of health products and services to keep you in the pink of health.



Tasteful Treats To Support Your Child's Developing Brain

The two essential omega-3 fatty acids that our bodies do not produce are docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA). It is important for us to obtain these nourishments through our diet or supplements. What's more, omega-3 oils are vital to a child's developing brain and supplementing the daily intake of DHA helps support their brain function and encourages better learning. Nature's Way Kids Smart Omega-3 Fish Oil trio has been designed specially for kids as each chewable capsule delivers a burst of flavourful blackcurrant, strawberry or orange while providing them with the nutrition they need. It's so tasty and delightful that your child will be sure to consume them.

Nature's Way Kids Smart Omega-3 Fish Oil Trio retails at \$25.90 (from now till 13 March) per bottle of 60 capsules and is available at Guardian Pharmacy.



Achieve Greater Mobility With Recogen Total®

Give your body its best support with stronger joints, bones and muscles by including Recogen Total® as part of a healthy diet. From encouraging cartilage growth to relieving discomfort and supporting connective tissues, Recogen Total® is a unique blend of ingredients comprising of bioactive collagen peptides, rose hip extract, Vitamin C, calcium and more. An oral powder that is soluble in liquid, Recogen Total® comes in hygiene and individual sachet packs. This makes it convenient to carry around and easy to consume. Simply add it into any favourite juices or simply take it with plain drinking water!

Recogen Total® retails at \$77 per box of 30 sachets and its available Kindly call **6744 5566** for more information.



Go Healthier And Get More With Gardenia

There's more reason to go healthier now with Gardenia's "Low in Sugar, Healthier Win!" Lucky Draw Promotion. Supporting the national initiative to reduce Singaporeans' sugar intake, Gardenia is encouraging the consumption of healthier low in sugar bread by giving lucky winners the chance to win over \$36,000 worth of cash and prizes. Gardenia's selection of low in sugar loaves contain less than 5g of sugar per 100g bread, and there are 10 different products for consumers to select from. Simply purchase any Gardenia's low in sugar product and participate by mail or sms by 22 March 2019, 11.59pm.

For more information on **Gardenia's "Low in Sugar, Healthier Win!" Lucky Draw Promotion** and other participation details, please visit <http://www.gardenia.com.sg/promotions.aspx>



Combat Aging With Cool Man™ & Cool Beauty™

While aging may bring about several displeasing effects on our body and skin, you can take supplements to support your system in tackling these symptoms. Cool Man™ and Cool Beauty™ are supplements for men and women respectively, each packed with capsules containing essential ingredients such as Epimedium, Morinda Radix, Calcium L-aspartate and more. These capsules are sure to provide you with the nourishment you need and aid in your battle against the effects of aging.

Q&N products are available at all leading pharmacies and Chinese medical halls. Call **67450321** for more information.

sweetspot
Partner Content



Photos: iStock



By ARUL JOHN

The body is about 60 per cent water. You constantly lose water from your body, primarily via urine and sweat.

To prevent dehydration, you need to drink adequate amounts of water.

Health authorities commonly recommend eight 8-ounce glasses, which equals about 2 litres of water. This is called the 8x8 rule and is very easy to remember.

However, some health gurus believe that you need to sip on water constantly throughout the day, even when you're not thirsty.

Many factors ultimately affect your need for water.

Many people claim that if you do not stay hydrated throughout the day, your energy levels and brain function start to suffer and there are plenty of studies to support this.

One study in women showed that a fluid loss of 1.36 per cent after exercise impaired mood and concentration and increased the frequency of headaches.

Other studies show that mild dehydration (1 to 3 per cent of body weight) caused by exercise or heat can harm many other aspects of brain function.

Keep in mind that just 1 per cent of body weight is a fairly significant amount. Mild dehydration can also negatively affect physical performance, leading to reduced endurance.

There are many claims that increased water intake may reduce body weight by increasing your metabolism and reducing your appetite.

According to two studies, drinking 17 ounces (500 ml) of water can temporarily boost metabolism by 24–30 per cent.

Additionally, it may be beneficial to drink cold water because your body will need to expend more calories to heat the water to body temperature.

Drinking water about a half hour before meals can also reduce the number of calories you end up consuming, especially in older individuals.

One study showed that dieters who drank 500 ml of water before each meal lost 44 per cent more weight over 12 weeks, compared to those who did not.

So drinking water can cause mild, temporary increases in metabolism, and drinking it about a half hour before each meal can make you automatically eat fewer calories.

Both of these effects contribute to weight loss. Several health problems supposedly respond well to increased water intake:

- Constipation: Increasing water intake can help with constipation, a very common problem.

- Cancer: Some studies show that those who drink more water have a lower risk of bladder and colorectal cancer, although other studies find no effect.
- Kidney stones: Increased water intake may decrease the risk of kidney stones.
- Acne and skin hydration: There are a lot of anecdotal reports about how water can help hydrate the skin and reduce acne. So far, no studies have confirmed or refuted this.

Trust your thirst

Maintaining water balance is essential for your survival.

For this reason, your body has a sophisticated system for regulating when and how much you drink.

When your total water content goes below a certain level, thirst kicks in.

This is controlled by mechanisms similar to breathing — you do not need to consciously think about it.

The thirst instinct is very reliable. That said, certain circumstances may call for increased water intake.

The most important one may be during times of increased sweating. This includes exercise and hot weather, especially in a dry climate.

If you are perspiring a lot, make sure to replenish the lost fluid with water. Athletes doing very long, intense exercises may also need to replenish electrolytes along with water.

Your water need also increases during breastfeeding, as well as several disease states like vomiting and diarrhea.

Furthermore, older people may need to consciously watch their water intake because the thirst mechanisms can start to malfunction in old age.

How much water is best?

No one can tell you exactly how much water you need. This depends on the individual.

Try experimenting to see what works best for you. Some people may function better with more water than usual, while for others it only results in more frequent trips to the bathroom.

If you want to keep things simple, these guidelines should apply to the majority of people:

- When you are thirsty, drink.
- When you Stop when you are not thirsty anymore.
- During high heat and exercise, drink enough to compensate for the lost fluids.

This article provides general information only and is not a substitute for medical advice. Please consult medical or healthcare professionals for advice on health-related matters.

aesthetic	specialist	specialist
Dr GOH EYE SPECIALIST Adj. Assoc. Prof Goh Kong Yong Cataracts, Lasers, Glaucoma, Diabetic Retinopathy, Double Vision, Floaters, Child Myopia, Blur Vision, Dry Eyes Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital #07-37 38, Irrawaddy Road, Singapore 329563 Tel: 6684 4140 / 9644 4830 (24 hr)	APPLE EYE CENTRE Dr. Yeo Kim Teck Cataract, Glaucoma, Retinal Surgery, Diabetes Laser, Myopia Management, General Eye Screening and treatment 290 Orchard Road, #11-01, The Paragon Medical Centre Tel: 6235 7000 / 8333 1101	DR BC NG Aesthetics Services: Threadlift / Non Surgical Facelift Threadlift : Cost from \$1,284.00 Ulthera Face & Neck : Cost \$2,996.00 Appointment : 6445 4545 DR BC NG AESTHETICS Mon to Fri: 11am to 6pm Sat : 11am to 2pm 1 Goldhill Plaza #01-39 Singapore 308899 (Near Novena MRT) www.drbcng.com.sg
SPECIALIST PAIN INTERNATIONAL CLINIC Dr Nicholas Chua Hai Liang, MBBS, MMed, Ph.D Mount Elizabeth Novena Specialist Medical Centre 38 Irrawaddy Road, #07-22/23, Singapore 329563 Tel: (65) 6339 1880 / 8511 2119	SINGAPORE SPORTS AND ORTHOPAEDIC CLINIC Specialist Orthopaedic Surgeon and Consultant with special interest in Knee and Shoulder pain and Arthroscopy, Total knee replacement, Neck & Back pain, Spine and disc problem, Elbow, Foot & Ankle problem #02-10/11/12 Gleneagles Medical Centre 6 Napier Road, Singapore 258499, SMS/HP: 91377787	
SIOW NEUROLOGY HEADACHE & PAIN CENTRE Mount Alvernia Hospital, Medical Centre Blk. D, #08-59 820 Thomson Road, Singapore 574623 Tel: 62545289	WEETY ORTHODONTICS SPECIALIST CARE Dr Wee Teng Yau Dental Braces, Invisalign, Permanent Retainers TripleOne Somerset, 111 Somerset Road #04-15 Singapore 238164 Tel: 6732 3722 WhatsApp: 9756 6952 Email: smile@wosc.com.sg	RADIANT MEDICAL & AESTHETIC CENTRE Laser/ IPL Skin Rejuvenation, HIFU Treatment, Radiofrequency Skin Tightening, Pigmentation, Acne & Acne Scar, Hair Removal, Botox, Fillers, Tattoo Removal, Chemical Peeling, Weight Loss Management. Blk 810 Hougang Central #01-220 Singapore 530810 Tel: 6881 2389
For advertising enquiries, please contact Augustin Ma 9833 2842 or myma@sph.com.sg		

Seungri's Singlish wins fans over

The South Korean singer's solo concert was marked by lots of love from his fans bowled over by his attempts at Singlish

Desiree Loh

South Korean singer Seungri usually performs as part of K-pop group quintet BigBang, but last Saturday, the 28-year-old was the centre of attention at his solo concert at The Star Theatre.

Dazzling a crowd of 1,600 ardent fans, the K-pop idol held his own during the 100-minute set, in which he sang a mix of BigBang's and his own hits and chatted with fans in fluent English.

Seungri, whose real name is Lee Seung-hyun, opened the Singapore stop of his first solo tour – The Great Seungri Tour – with a rousing performance of BigBang's 2015 chart-topper Bang Bang Bang, which saw concertgoers rising to their feet and chanting along to the chorus.

Although the energy of the crowd was palpable, the 5,000-seat theatre was only a third-full and this did not go unnoticed by the singer, who played it off breezily.

"I can see empty seats, but fine, fine, fine. I don't care because I have you guys," he said.

While the concert was a high-octane affair, with the crowd readily acquiescing to his requests to jump and put their hands in the air, Seungri also worked in sentimental ballads such as his 2011 solo In My World, and surprised fans with a heartfelt rendition of Mandopop royalty Jay Chou's The Longest Movie (2007).

During the show, Seungri repeatedly professed his love of Singapore and peppered his sentences with Singlish. "Any other Korean artist can't do this. I'm the best (at Singlish) because I love Singapore so much," he said.

The K-pop star was flanked by two male dancers during performances of songs such as his solo hit Gotta Talk To You (2013).



The stage set-up was simple, with lit LED screens, strobe lights and occasional smoke effects to complement the singer's performance.

The seasoned entertainer, who made his debut in 2006, is known for his candour and he invited peals of laughter from audiences throughout the night.

When talking about how social

media connects the world, he said he sometimes hates such platforms because of the rumours about him that circulate on them.

"But I love rumours, you know. It's better than nobody talking about me. Rumours are like love," he joked.

After noticing fans holding up banners which read "I'll stay with you" in Korean, he responded: "You

guys can stay with me because I'm not a bad guy."

Long-time fan Mohammad Azroy Ruzaini praised the singer's showmanship. "I was so surprised by his Mandarin and Singlish. He was very down-to-earth and that made me feel closer to him," said the 30-year-old, who paid \$208 for his ticket.

For Malaysian fan Norlina Os-

man, flying in to see the singer was a no-brainer.

"This is my last chance to see him before he enlists in the army. I just wish he had performed more of his solo songs because they're so good, but he rarely sings them," said the 28-year-old architect.

desloh@sph.com.sg

During the show, Seungri repeatedly professed his love of Singapore.

PHOTO: CK STAR ENTERTAINMENT

The cast of Late Company (from left) Edward Choy, Adrian Pang, Xander Pang, Karen Tan and Janice Koh put up a nuanced performance. PHOTO: CRISPAN CHAN



Deep look at bullying and parenting

REVIEW / THEATRE

LATE COMPANY
Pangdemonium
Victoria Theatre/Last Saturday

Ong Sor Fern

The tension in Late Company is palpable even before the house lights dim and curtain rises on the play.

On a stylish set, Debora (Janice Koh) and Michael (Edward Choy) are literally setting the scene, laying place settings for a dinner.

But there are undercurrents of

unease as they huddle in hushed exchanges, Debora knocks back a glass of wine while Michael disappears through the patio doors for a cigarette.

Their dinner guests – Tamara (Karen Tan), Bill (Adrian Pang) and their son Curtis (Xander Pang) – are late.

But what causes the unease, which erupts in tears and confrontation over the next 80 minutes, is the fact that Curtis might have driven Debora and Michael's son Joel to suicide with his bullying.

Pangdemonium has displayed a real knack for staging handsome productions with socially relevant themes that resonate with audiences and Late Company is the latest example of its winning formula.

Under director Tracie Pang's assured hand, the veteran cast of actors playing the parents acquit themselves well.

They each bring a lifetime's experience to the play's fraught exchanges, which thankfully do not deteriorate into screaming matches despite the intensity.

The characters are recognisable ones: the emotional artist (Debora), the correct politician (Michael), the anxious peace-making matron

(Tamara) and the slightly abrasive yuppie (Bill).

Playwright Jordan Tannahill was only 23 when he wrote this script. But he is canny enough to shade the characters with nuance to suggest rather than delineate stereotypes.

Does Bill's emphasis on sports suggest macho homophobia? Is Michael also homophobic despite his seemingly liberal stance?

Tamara's New Age prattling could signal either a desperation to mend fences or just middle-class vapidty. Debora's defence of her son's flamboyance could be seen either as emotionally supportive or wilful denial.

The fact that an almost-decade-old script from a young Canadian playwright has transplanted so well to Singapore also speaks volumes about the continuing relevance of the issues it addresses: bullying, homophobia, parenting in the 21st century.

As the parental couples spar, it becomes evident that the play is also about responsibility.

Who bears the responsibility when a teenager commits suicide: Is it the parents who fail to recognise the signs, the bully whose actions drive a boy to desperation, the school system which fails to arrest the bullying?

Each confrontation, as it turns the tables on different characters, throws up a different issue and more questions than the play answers. These difficult questions, which hopefully will spark more discussions in audiences, are the best reasons to spend time with this Company.

Room to ponder the afterlife

REVIEW / THEATRE

THE TRANSITION ROOM
Toy Factory Productions
Drama Centre Black Box/Last Saturday

Akshita Nanda

While devising this production of The Transition Room, playwright-director Stanley Seah asked his team to research minimalism. The result is a play that indeed does more with less.

Repetitive scenes, sounds and patterns of light create the illusion that the Drama Centre Black Box is an infinite space divided into a series of waiting rooms. Protagonist Mike (Christer Aplin) wanders from room to room, seeking the truth of his afterlife.

Costumes come in shades of grey, as does the modular set of blocks – both designed by Vivien Lau – which transform into seats or tables as each scene requires.

The colours are soothing or menacing in turn, depending on the tone of Mike's encounters in each room.

Performers Kaykay Nizam, Tan

Hui Er, Victoria Chen, Jazmine Monaz and Marc Valentine Chia switch from beatific to brutal, keeping both audience and Mike off balance.

Perhaps Mike is moving through the circles of Hell or Purgatory, as Dante described, or perhaps it is all in his mind, as Asian philosophies suggest. It is up to the audience to decide since the play is not going to provide any answers, as the performers admit sympathetically, breaking the fourth wall.

Inspired by Seah's childhood fear of death and dissolution, The Transition Room is not as immediately appealing as last October's Watching, his other play about the eerie gloom of liminal spaces, both real and metaphorical.

In Watching, odd things happened as the protagonist was waiting for national service to begin and the audience knew there would be a happy ending.

But in The Transition Room, the odd things that happen to Mike pluck at a deeply hidden human fear of what comes after death. Everyone Mike encounters seems to be in on a huge joke and Mike is worried he is the punchline.

The big questions of human exist-

tence come up – Who am I? Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? – only to be discarded when Mike has a real chance to get them answered.

After all, what people really want is not a destination but a continuing journey. And, as it turned out, Mike's journey is also the audience's, to stay captive in a room until the lights come on, signalling that it was time to move on to the next thing.

BOOK IT / THE TRANSITION ROOM

WHERE: Drama Centre Black Box, Level 5 National Library Building, 100 Victoria Street

WHEN: Today, tomorrow and Saturday, 3pm; Wednesday to Friday, 3 and 8pm

ADMISSION: \$45 from bit.ly/2TGXSxL

INFO: www.toyfactory.com.sg



Tan Hui Er and Christer Aplin in The Transition Room. PHOTO: TOY FACTORY PRODUCTIONS

Celebrating Grammy wins with fast food

Country singer-songwriter Kacey Musgraves, who won a surprise four Grammys, indulged in burgers and fries

NEW YORK • If you ask Kacey Musgraves – the country singer-songwriter who won a surprise four Grammys on Feb 10, including Album of the Year – how her week has been, you will get a pretty good idea of her default manner.

"I've had better."

Her tongue-in-cheek deflection spoke to the shock that a progressive Nashville misfit from Texas could have beaten rappers Cardi B, Drake and Kendrick Lamar for the highest annual honour in music.

Golden Hour, Musgraves' third major label album, was critically beloved but had barely been embraced by country radio and was far from a smash.

But it went on to pick up Grammys for Best Country Album, Best Country Solo Performance (Butterflies) and Best Country Song (Space Cowboy).

In Musgraves' first interview since her Cinderella moment, she reflected on this year's Grammys, her place in the Nashville scene and what is to come.

How have you been celebrating?

Lots of R&R time. Definitely happy moments with the team, but also celebrating with food.

Enjoying having some burgers – note the plural nature. But I am already back to a week of shows.

And how did you celebrate that night – did you go hard or just crash at the hotel?

I went really hard at Fatburger. I am not, like, hugely into an after-party scene, usually. I kind of like celebrating on my own terms.

But we did stop by.

And then afterwards, not only did I have a fried chicken sandwich but I also had a cheeseburger... And I

ate both, 100 per cent, and fries.

I sat there and ate it in the restaurant in my Valentino dress. I went straight from shaking Mick Jagger's hand to having a fried chicken sandwich in my hand.

What do you remember about the moment your name was called for that final award?

Disbelief, in general. But weirdly, a sense of calmness.

Leading up to an award like that, you have a little hope, I think, that maybe you will win. But I was fine with not winning because it was just such a crazy compliment to be nominated alongside such giant albums.

So you can hope that you may have a small chance, but I definitely was nowhere near banking on anything. It was a really beautiful moment and I was somehow able to find the words to get out what I wanted to say.

I do not think it is something that you can process until way later.

Any standout Grammy moments from behind the scenes?

If you could have seen us quick-changing into my Dolly Parton outfit and giant hair in a matter of seven minutes, that would have been something to see.

If I would have just walked away from that night having just performed with Dolly, that would have felt like the win of a lifetime for myself, because she is the ultimate, as far as I'm concerned.

Obviously the Grammys got some flak last year about its representation of women, and this year was an attempt at a make-up. How do you think the show did?

I think the Grammys definitely

made up for last year's lack of female representation, but the credit also has to go to the women who are the ones making the art.

You never want to think that there is a crazy influx – a 180 from last year – because of (tokenism).

It would be a shame to feel that way. But in this case, there were a lot of really beautiful pieces of work released. So I am not going to think about it that much.

You have not always been embraced by the Nashville establishment. Were you surprised that you cleaned up in the country categories?

Country music itself and the Nashville community have always shown me great support and love from the beginning.

When I first moved to town about 11 years ago, I got a giant education from the Nashville songwriting community.

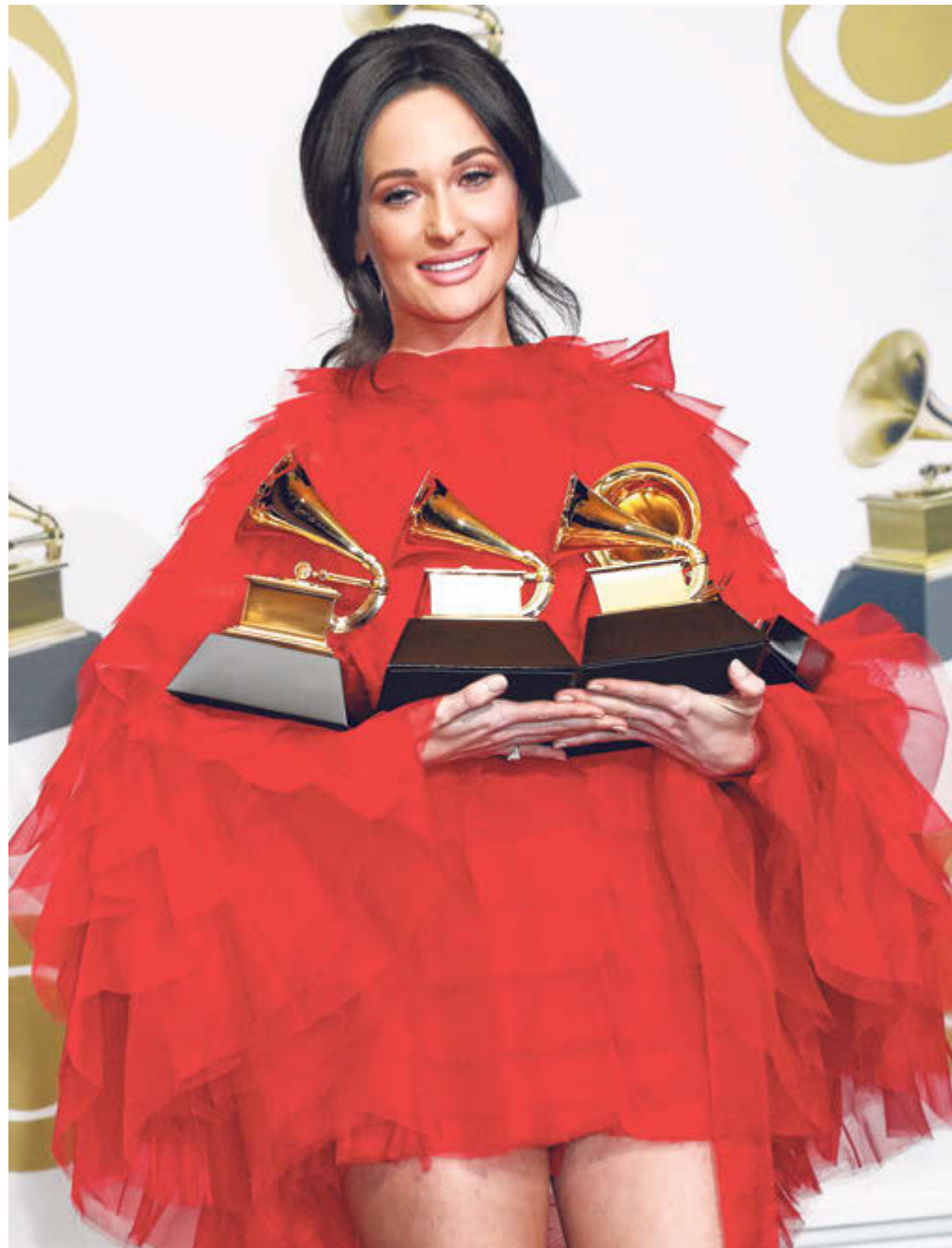
I made a ton of friends, I worked really hard for years there before I was even an artist myself.

So I feel really connected to that community and I feel like they do have my back. That is a whole different side of Nashville.

Can we expect a new album this year?

My goal, in general, is just to be able to stay somewhat inspired by something, and to be able to tap some kind of creative vein. So I will poke around and see if I can catch some kind of creative wind, songwise, at some point soon.

There are a couple of songs I really like. I have no idea where that is going to go, but that is the fun of it – exploring until you can find something to start packing into the next snowball. NYTIMES



Kacey Musgraves' (above) Grammy wins included Album of the Year. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

Play about love letters lost in translation

REVIEW / THEATRE

LOVE LETTERS

Nelson Chia and Mia Chee
Esplanade Recital Studio/
Last Saturday

Toh Wen Li

American playwright A.R. Gurney's acclaimed Love Letters (1988) is about two lifelong friends – strait-laced Andrew and troubled, rebellious Melissa – who read out letters they have written to each other over 50 years.

It is also an unusual play.

With minimal action, a sparse set and two actors who read from a script rather than memorise their lines, it was once described by original director John Tillingier as "a piece of chamber music that uses actors as instruments".

Tinkering with the music of Gurney's script – arguably the main star of the show – was always going to be a gamble.

Sadly, this does not quite pay off in Nelson Chia and Mia Chee's recent Mandarin adaptation, which is an assured production but lacks emotional heft.

The main duo in Chia and Chee's

Love Letters are Chinese-Americans who go by the names Xinnan and Xiaoman instead of Andrew and Melissa. They become pen-pals in second grade (Primary 2) and continue to pour their hearts out to each other as they go through school, war and marriages to other people.

Straitlaced Xinnan goes to Yale University, becomes a successful lawyer and is eventually elected to the United States Senate.

Meanwhile, Xiaoman leads a turbulent life. Her parents are divorced, her stepfather "bothers" her in her bedroom – an unsettling detail that is never revisited – and she drops out of a series of schools.

She later finds some success as an artist, but her troubles continue and she drifts in and out of psychiatric wards as well as marriages.

One of the paradoxes of letter-writing is that it is both intimate and distant. This is a conceit that works well in Love Letters, whose characters are thwarted lovers – living separate lives – who nonetheless share a deep friendship.

Chia and Chee, co-founders of Nine Years Theatre, are known for their Mandarin adaptations of Western classics. Gurney's play, firmly rooted in the milieu of America's upper-middle-class white Anglo-



Saxon Protestant culture, however, might not have been the best candidate for a trans-cultural adaptation.

The characters occasionally intersperse their speech with English words – Xinnan even quotes from Milton's Paradise Lost. They are equally prone to expressions such as fang fei ji (to stand someone up) and pa tuo (dating), which come from Cantonese. All this can seem oddly disorienting.

Chia and Chee, who are married to each other in real life, are fine actors and delivered solid performances at the Esplanade Recital Studio on Saturday night, carefully sidestep-

ping the trap of sentimentality.

But an older pair of actors might have lent themselves better to this play, which is as much about nostalgia and regret as the trials of young love.

Like Xinnan and Xiaoman, who cannot help looking over the other's shoulders when they meet in person after months of correspondence, one struggles to reconcile the figures on stage with the ones on the page.

The actors were reading out love letters, but sadly the humour and melancholy between the lines did not always translate.

Love Letters' Mia Chee (far left) and Nelson Chia.

PHOTO: TUCKYS PHOTOGRAPHY

The BEST platform for all Food Businesses!

FOOD & Beverage Fair 2019

21-24 MARCH
SINGAPORE EXPO HALL 5
11am-10pm Daily

- Intensive prints, radio & social media coverage
- Large consumer crowd
- Maximize Product Exposure

BOOK YOUR SPACE NOW!

Call **6747 4620**
sales@singaporefoodshows.com.sg

For more information, visit
http://bit.ly/singaporefoodshows

Organized by: **Exhibits Inc.** SingaporeFoodShows

"Satisfied with the spike in our sales and the marketing support"
Mr Irwin Ang, Bee Cheng Hiang

健康保健展
health FESTA
Health • Wellness • Nutrition

FREE Admission
入場免費

3 Generations Under ONE 三代同堂 ROOF

3-5 MAY 2019
Suntec Convention Halls 403 – 405

5月3日至5日
新达城展览中心403 – 405展厅
11am – 8pm (Fri – Sun, 星期四 – 星期日)

BOOK YOUR SPACE NOW!
*Limited booths available

Ms Kelen Koh
9762 2027 | kelenkoh@sph.com.sg

Ms Marie Yeo
9699 9339 | marieyeo@sph.com.sg

Ms Adeline Goh
9681 6289 | gohtna@sph.com.sg

For more information, visit
www.healthfiesta.sg

Organized by: **sghealthfiesta** **AN sph EVENT**

thenewpaper

Weets Eats

From hipster to hawker,
the best places to eat out

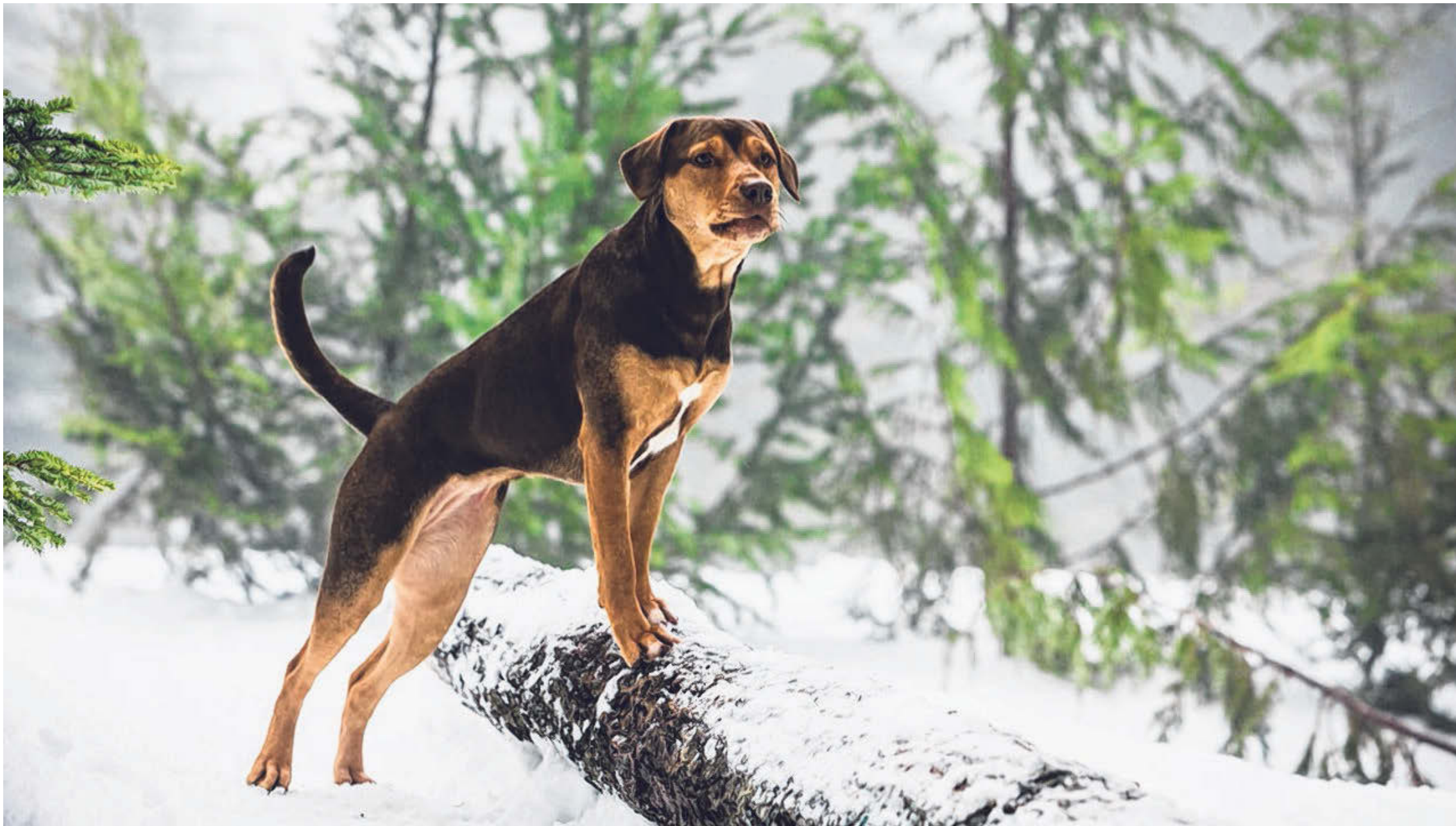
The best ingredients
tnp.sg/lifestyle

BON VOYAGE TOP SPOTS

The Fairy Tale King of Germany

Read this & more in **ST Life Bon Voyage** with **sgtravellers** – a weekly Tuesday travel feature

THE STRAITS TIMES **SGTRAVELLERS** **MOBILE APPS**



In *A Dog's Way Home* (left), former shelter dog Shelby plays Bella, a pet who goes in search of her owner. PHOTO: SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT

Mutt's trash-to-riches tale

Star of *A Dog's Way Home* lived in a landfill before being discovered

LOS ANGELES • You have heard the stories of an actor doggedly putting in the legwork before a career breakthrough.

The star of *A Dog's Way Home*, showing in Singapore, has a hard-luck tale that could top them all.

Before her big break, she was living in a landfill, rooting through garbage for her next meal.

Meet Shelby, a tan-and-black mutt who portrays Bella, occupying the screen, often solo, for much of the film's 97 minutes – and whose trash-to-riches saga could itself be a gripping cinematic yarn.

Shelby's big break came in April 2017, when animal-control officer Megan Buhler was driving in Cheatham County, Tennessee, a rural area about 40km from Nashville.

Out on an unrelated call, she spotted and approached what she recalled was a noticeably skittish dog emerging from the dump.

"So I knelt down and just said, 'Oh, come here, baby,'" said Ms Buhler.

"There were lots of cars driving by – I mean, it was heavy traffic. She was so scared, and she finally came right up to me and I was able to put her in my truck."

The pair headed to the county animal shelter, where the staff took to calling the new resident Baby Girl.

Ms Buhler had no inkling that Hollywood was looking for a dog to play Bella in a film written by Cathryn Michon and W. Bruce Cameron and based on the latter's book.

A central storyline involves local

laws that prohibit certain dog breeds from living within municipalities or counties. In this case, the focus was Denver's ban on "pit bull breeds".

Cameron and Michon, who are married, are unabashed dog lovers and say part of their passion is expressed by advocating for homeless dogs whenever possible.

"We started off in the very beginning saying that the dog that is the star of the movie will have to be a rescue, because we were trying to prove something," Cameron said. "We think we're making a difference in the animals' lives when they are adopted and we're trying to reveal to the world that rescue dogs are wonderful animals."

The film-makers hired trainer Debbie Pearl, whose company Paws For Effect functions as an animal talent agency of sorts, one known for finding adoptable dogs and training them for on-screen roles.

Ms Pearl assigned the find-a-Bella job to Ms Teresa Ann Miller, a freelance trainer whose credits include *White God*, an acclaimed 2014 Hungarian film that features more than 200 dogs.

Meanwhile, back in Tennessee, Baby Girl was already getting diva treatment. The shelter's staff believe that shooting stellar photographs of its animals immensely boosts their adoption prospects.

One day, Ms Miller spotted Baby Girl's adoption photo. Still, she was wary. Two promising canine candidates already had not panned out.

A third possible Bella had been adopted from a Los Angeles shelter the night before she was scheduled to meet and videotape the dog.

But the Miller-Baby Girl summit proceeded without a hitch, spanning two hours, with the trainer assessing her new friend on personality, temperament and the ability

to respond to simple commands.

Ms Miller was sold.

Within two weeks, Cameron and Michon travelled to Tennessee, met Baby Girl and developed the same crush.

In short order, Ms Miller adopted Baby Girl from the shelter on behalf of Ms Pearl and Paws For Effect, renamed her Shelby ("a really cute Southern name") and took her to California for training.

Ms Miller said her approach reflects the style of her late father Karl Miller, a well-known Hollywood animal trainer, eschewing quick commands in favour of talking in sentences to elicit more relaxed behaviour. "Instead of saying, 'Come, sit, stay', we might say: 'Can you come over here? Hey, what are you doing?'"

The training took more than three months before shooting began.

Most of the film's reviews have

lauded Shelby's performance.

Variety wrote that the movie "is at its best when relying on Shelby and her trainers: It's amazing how much of the humour, drama and emotion is carried on her canine shoulders".

With such approval, has its heroine gone Hollywood? Sunglasses at night? Not Shelby.

After additional training, she is now working as a therapy dog at places that include veterans' facilities, hospitals and schools attended by students with special needs.

Shelby lives with Ms Pearl in Huntington Beach, California.

One recent visitor was Ms Buhler, who needed only a split second to compare the movie star with the dog she coaxed away from piles of trash. "She's exactly the same," she said. WASHINGTON POST

• *A Dog's Way Home* is showing in cinemas.

Buoyant, spirited performance of rarely heard works

REVIEW/CONCERT

CHRISTOPHER PARK PLAYS

MOZART

Singapore Symphony Orchestra
Victoria Concert Hall/
Last Friday

Chang Tou Liang

It is hard to believe that there are still symphonies by Mozart and Haydn which have never been heard in Singapore.

This was partly redressed in a pair of Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO) concerts conducted by German conductor Bruno Weil, a renowned specialist in the Classical repertoire.

Opening the evening was a symphony in D major, crafted from three movements of Mozart's "Posthorn" Serenade (K.320).

For all intents and purposes, this pseudo-symphony sounded like a real symphony, including a slow introduction to the first movement before breaking out into a vigorous sonata-form Allegro.

Even the slow movement, an Andantino, had real pathos, with two oboes providing motif interest.

Only missing was a Minuet and Trio movement, obligatory in the classical symphony.

The lively finale had a festive feel (the serenade was composed to conclude a university year), no doubt aided by pairs of French horns and trumpets, and timpani.

Jonathan Fox's timpani provided the loud rumbling beginning to Haydn's Symphony No. 103 In E Flat Major, so unimaginatively nicknamed the "Drumroll".

Here was a true symphony in four movements from the "Father of the Symphony", in a performance that was buoyant and spirited.

Despite small forces employed, the playing made no apologies for adopting a big sound. There was none of the thinness and tinniness often associated with the authentic performance movement.

The SSO is not a period instrument group and does not have to pretend to be one.

Guest concertmaster Eugen Tichindeleanu had lovely solos in the slow movement's variations on a folk-like theme, while the French horns had a field day opening the proceedings to the finale.

Most importantly, in these energetic Singapore premieres, the SSO under Weil made the Mozart and Haydn symphonies sound vital and relevant.

Symphony premieres were perhaps not the reason the concert was sold out.

This was more likely due to interest in hearing young Korean-German pianist Christopher Park perform Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 In D Minor (K.466).

In this most dramatic of the Austrian composer's 27 piano concertos, there was a genuine sense of storm and drang (storm and stress) in both the solo part and orchestral partnership.

Park was a sensitive player, but not one by mincing the notes. Often, he rose to the orchestra's challenge and was never to be overwhelmed.

Particularly interesting were his own cadenzas written for the first and third movements, which were highly virtuosic and conjured a sense of fantasy without straying away from the idiom.

His encore of Chopin's posthumous Nocturne In C Sharp Minor was also well appreciated by the audience.

After this very satisfying showing with a sympathetic conductor, let it not ever be said that the SSO is clueless about Mozart and Haydn.

Opera's insightful look at the human state

REVIEW/CONCERT

PAINTED SKIN

Singapore Chinese Orchestra
Huayi – Chinese Festival of Arts
Esplanade Concert Hall/Last Saturday

Chang Tou Liang

The Chinese love a good ghost story and Esplanade's Huayi – Chinese Festival of Arts delivered a coup in Painted Skin (Hua Pi), an opera in concert by Chinese composer Hao Weiya and librettist Wang Yuanfei.

Directed by Yi Liming, its world premiere in Shanghai last October was also given by the Singapore Chinese Orchestra (SCO) with three soloists and conducted by Yeh Tsung.

Adapted from a popular story in Pu Songling's *Strange Tales From A Chinese Studio*, the plot involves a love affair between a scholar and a demon in human disguise. Thus its title usually refers to nefarious intentions cloaked in a veneer of geniality.

Performed by a chamber-sized SCO numbering 29 players, the music was stark but highly atmospheric, transparent and often atonal, in the manner of the Second Viennese School of Schoenberg and Berg.

Each of the four acts opened with guan solos by Han Lei, tortuous wails foreshadowing the intrigue and drama to come.

The gender reversals in the cast were also telling. The only male role, Scholar Wang, was sung by mezzo-soprano Dong Fang while love interest Gui Yan, a succubus in Beijing opera garb, was played by actor Liu Zheng. Her pale outfit with a face to match, and onstage moonwalking, should have alerted Wang of the deception but smitten

poets were not to be denied.

Wang's seemingly virtuous wife, sung by soprano Li Jing Jing, provided the final side of this eternal triangle.

Each act had a duet as its centrepiece, helping to flesh out the characters and their motivations.

However, it was the third act's ballad of the scorned wife, with the ubiquitous guan providing poignant counterpoint to Li's angst, which was likely to move most hearts.

Two short interludes between acts gave Gui Yan, ironically, a more human face.

Her endeavour was to seek out a heart of purity (namely Wang's), possess it and leave the realm of demons forever. Wang's reciprocation was, however, less honourable. His transition from fascination to captivation to outright lust was easily accomplished on a slippery slope.

On the spartan stage, symbolism reigned supreme. Wang's umbrella was a phallic presence while the couple's space-age raincoats-for-outfits were foils for deeper and darker secrets. Dripping rain, interweaving hands and flowers swirling in water projected on a large screen also substituted for acts of consummation.

On probing recesses of the human heart, was its colour crimson or black?

All was revealed in the fourth and longest act, which was also the most climactic. That its tragicomic final confrontation provided the audience with the most laughs should not diminish the stature of the 95-minute opera, performed without intermission.

That the best of demons could also cuss like the worst of people was an indictment of the human state. People's hearts, despite the cover of painted skin, is as black as pitch.

Library talks by seasoned journalists

CO-ORGANISED BY THE STRAITS TIMES
AND NATIONAL LIBRARY BOARD

askST@NLB

you ask, we answer, come listen

Under the skin of
a world-class athlete

Speakers



Rohit Brijnath
Assistant Sports Editor,
The Straits Times



Jasmine Ser
National shooter

B1-01 Programme Zone, Central Public Library, 100 Victoria Street

Thursday, March 7, 2019 | 7 to 8.30pm
(Registration starts at 6pm)

Sign up at <http://str.sg/askRohit1>

For more information, go to www.straitstimes.com/askst

Comics

BABY BLUES



GARFIELD



Free to air

CHANNEL 5

AM
6.00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 16 (HD) (PG) (V)
7.00 First Look Asia (Simulcast From CNA) (CA)
9.00 The Dr Oz Show 10 (HD) (IE)
10.00 The \$100,000 Pyramid 2 (PG) (V)
10.30 Everyday Gourmet 3 (HD) (IE)
11.00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 16 (PG) (V)
PM
12.00 Bondi Harvest With Guy Turland (IE)
12.30 Gordon Ramsay's Ultimate Cookery Course (IE)
1.00 Films & Stars (PG) (V)
1.30 Kin (PG) (CC) (V)
2.00 Phua Chu Kang Pte Ltd 4 (SC)
2.30 Body And Soul 6 (IE)
3.00 The Dr Oz Show 10 (HD) (PG) (IE)
4.00 Rojak (PG) (V)
4.30 Survivor 37 (PG) (V)
5.30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 16 (PG) (V)
6.30 The \$100,000 Pyramid 2 (PG) (V)
7.00 Wheel Of Fortune 36 (CC) (V)
7.30 Little Big Shots US 3 (PG) (CC) (V)
8.30 Kin (PG) (CC) (D)
9.00 News 5
9.30 Hands That Shaped The Nation: The Merdeka Generation (IE)
10.00 Avenue 14 (PG13) (D)
11.00 Grimm 6 (PG) (D)
AM
12.00 Kin (PG) (CC) (D)
12.30 Lion Moms (PG13) (D)
1.30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 16 (PG) (V)
2.20 Hawaii Five-0 7 (PG) (D)
3.10 Lethal Weapon (PG13) (D)
4.10 Bondi Harvest With Guy Turland (IE)
4.40 Gordon Ramsay's Ultimate Cookery Course (IE)
5.10 The Dr Oz Show 10 (IE)

CHANNEL 8

AM
6.00 3-Plus-14 (V)
7.00 Tuesday Report – #myconnections2 (CC) (IE)
7.30 Hello Singapore Highlights (HD) (News)
8.00 Walk With Me (PG) (CC) (D)

9.00 Morning Express (HD) (News)
9.30 Jalan Jalan (PG) (CC) (D)
10.00 Food And Beverage Investigators 8 (IE)
10.30 Night Market Life Aka Life (PG) (D)
PM
12.30 Body SOS 7 (PG) (CC) (V)
1.00 News 8 At One (HD)
1.30 Focus (CC) (CA)
2.00 Beijing Opera Cats (S)
2.30 The Precedents (PG) (D)
3.30 The Golden Path (CC) (D)
4.30 Taste Of Life (PG) (D)
5.30 When Duty Calls (PG) (CC) (D)
6.30 Hello Singapore (HD) (News)
7.30 Jalan Jalan (PG) (CC) (D)
8.00 Old Taste Detective (CC) (IE)
9.00 Walk With Me (PG) (CC) (D)
10.00 News Tonight
10.30 Hands That Shaped The Nation: The Merdeka Generation (CC) (IE)
11.00 Princess Agents (PG13) (D)
AM
12.00 The Princess Weiyung (PG) (D)
1.00 Super Taste 12 (V)
2.00 Fiery Passion (D)
4.00 A Place Called Home (PG) (D)

CHANNEL U

PM
3.00 Markets In Asia (CC) (IE)
4.00 Find Me A Singaporean 4 (IE)
5.00 Cheongdamdong Scandal (PG) (CC) (D)
6.00 The Girl Who Sees Smells (PG) (CC) (D)
7.00 My Father Is Strange (PG) (CC) (D)
9.00 Magic Chef (PG) (CC) (D) (Debut)
9.30 The Distance Between (PG) (CC) (D)
10.00 Brother's Keeper 2 (PG) (CC) (D)
11.00 News Tonight
11.30 Magic Chef (PG) (CC) (D) (Debut)
AM
12.00 The Distance Between (PG) (CC) (D)
12.30 My Father Is Strange (PG) (CC) (D)
2.30 Close

CNA

AM
6.00 Singapore Tonight
6.30 The Budget And You
7.00 First Look Asia
9.00 Asia Business First

10.02 Distracted While Driving
11.00 News Now
PM
1.02 Land Unlimited
2.00 News Now
4.02 Wild City
5.00 News Now
7.02 Land Unlimited
8.00 Primetime Asia
9.02 Undercover Asia 6 (CC)
10.00 Singapore Tonight
11.02 Land Unlimited
AM
12.00 News Now
12.30 The Budget And You
1.02 Undercover Asia 6
2.00 News Now
2.30 Once A Refugee
3.02 Wild City
4.00 News Now
4.30 Once A Refugee
5.02 Undercover Asia 6
Programmes may be pre-empted by breaking news

VASANTHAM

PM
3.00 Super Samayal 4 (IE)
3.30 Anjaraipetti 5 (Cul)
4.00 Priyasakhi (D)
4.30 Vasantham Express 5 (IE)
5.30 Mighty Raju Animation Series (S)
6.00 Raama Seetha (PG) (D)
7.00 Konjam Soru Konjam Varalaru (CC) (Cul)
7.30 Mella Thiranthatu Katavu 3 (PG) (CC) (D)
8.00 Uyire (PG) (CC) (D)
8.30 Tamil Seithi (News)
9.00 Ms V Supreme 2019 (CC) (V)
10.00 Rowthiram (PG13) (CC) (D)
10.30 Nijangal (PG) (CC) (D)
11.00 Maalai Maalai Vasantham (V)
11.30 Tamil Seithi (News) (Encore)
AM
12.00 Close

OKTO

AM
9.00 Justin Time (P)
9.30 Teddies (P)
10.00 Guess How Much I Love You (P)
10.30 Sesame Street (P)

11.00 Mouk (P)
11.30 Ready Jet Go! (P)
PM
12.00 Hiccup & Sneeze (P)
12.30 Teddies (P)
1.00 Rob The Robot (P)
1.30 Justin Time (P)
2.00 Guess How Much I Love You (P)
2.30 Sesame Street (P)
3.00 Mouk (P)
3.30 Ready Jet Go! (P)
4.00 Odd Squad (HD) (S)
4.30 Shutterbugs (S)
5.00 Littlest Pet Shop (S)
5.30 Alvin!!! & The Chipmunks (S)
6.00 The New Powerpuff Girls (S)
6.30 Basic Mini-tary Training (S)
7.00 Bonta Aka Axel The Biggest Little Hero (M)
8.30 Inazuma Eleven (CC) (S)
9.00 ATP 250: Open 13 Provence (Sports) (Delayed)
11.00 Battle Of The Network Stars (Sports)
AM
12.00 Close

SURIA

PM
3.00 Juxbox Ekspres
4.00 Bibik-Bibikku (PG) (D)
5.00 Rahsia Hati Perempuan (PG) (CC) (D)
6.00 BoBoiBoy Galaxy (HD) (S)
6.30 Apa Rasa? (IE)
7.00 Maknum Yang Paling Aku Cinta (PG) (CC) (D)
8.00 Berita (HD) (News)
8.30 Dansa Mania (CC) (V)
9.30 Mak Cun 4 (PG) (CC) (D)
10.30 Bingit 2 (PG) (D)
11.30 Berita (HD) (News) (R)
AM
12.00 Close

C: Children; CA: Current Affairs;
CC: Closed Captions; Cul: Culture;
D: Drama; IE: Info-Ed; M: Movies;
P: Preschool; PG: Parental Guidance;
R: Repeat; S: Schoolkids; SC: Sitcom;
V: Variety

Programme schedules correct at time of printing. Telecast details from Mediacorp, StarHub and Singtel TV. For pay TV updates, go to www.starhub.com/tv or www.singtelv.com.sg

StarHub TV

HISTORY (CHANNEL 401)

AM
9.30 Navy Seals: America's Secret Warriors
11.20 Mountain Men 6
PM
12.15 The Curse Of Oak Island 4
1.10 Kingpin
3.00 Pawn Stars 19
3.30 Mountain Men 6
4.25 Navy Seals: America's Secret Warriors
6.15 Swamp People 8
7.10 Pawn Stars 18
8.05 Storage Wars: Texas 6
8.30 Storage Wars 11
9.00 The Pickers 9
9.55 Counting Cars 7
10.50 Detroit Steel
11.45 Genius

LIFETIME (CHANNEL 514)

AM
10.00 Making A Model With Yolanda Hadid
11.00 Up! Pretty
PM
12.00 Dance Moms 7
1.00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 16
2.00 Michael Jackson: Searching For Neverland
4.00 The Rap Game 3
5.00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 16
6.00 Top Chef Jr
7.00 Glam Masters
8.00 Atlanta Plastic
9.00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 16
10.00 The Wrong Bed: Naked Pursuit
11.35 Man Vs Child: Chef Showdown 2

HBO (CHANNEL 601)

AM
10.00 True Detective 3 (NC16)
11.15 Crashing 3 (NC16)
11.45 Darkest Hour (PG)
PM
1.45 Rampage (NC16)
3.30 Toy Story 3 (PG)
5.10 Alvin And The Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (PG)
6.35 Johnny English Reborn (PG)
8.15 The Adjustment Bureau (PG)
10.00 True Detective 3 (NC16)
11.15 Crashing 3 (NC16)
11.45 High Maintenance 3 (M18)
AM
12.15 Game Of Thrones (NC16)
2.10 Down With Love (PG)
3.50 Fahrenheit 451 (2018) (NC16)
5.25 Exit Wounds (NC16)

CINEMAX (CHANNEL 611)

AM
10.20 Who's That Girl
11.55 Sleepless (NC16)
PM
1.30 Looking Glass (NC16)
3.15 The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy (PG)
5.05 Paycheck
7.05 Red (PG)
9.00 Strike Back 6 (NC16)

10.00 Back To The Future
11.55 The Amityville Horror (M18)
AM
1.25 Event Horizon (NC16)

HUB E CITY (CHANNEL 825)

AM
10.15 I Am The Actor (HD)
PM
12.15 Still Loving You (HD)
1.30 Chicago Typewriter (HD)
2.50 Where Are We Going, Dad? 5 (HD)
4.45 Still Loving You (HD)
6.00 Dowry (HD)
7.00 Hot Door Night 16 (HD)
8.00 Perfect Dating 6 (HD)
9.30 Shui Guo Zhuan (HD)
10.05 Noble Aspirations (HD)
11.00 Hot Door Night 16 (HD)

HUB SPORTS 1 (CHANNEL 201)

AM
8.30 ISU Four Continents Figure Skating Championships: Women's Short Programme
PM
12.30 Tennis: ATP Champions Tour 2018
1.00 Spirit Of Yachting 2018
1.30 Multi Sport: Action Sports World
2.30 Tennis: ATP 500 Rio Open Presented By Claro: Day 7 Finals
5.00 Tennis: ATP 500 Rio Open Presented by Claro: Highlights
6.00 ATP 500 Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships: Day 1 (Session 1)
10.00 Multi Sport: Action Sports World
11.00 ATP 500 Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships: Day 1 (Session 2)
AM
3.00 Tennis: Deuce

HUB SPORTS 2 (CHANNEL 202)

AM
10.00 Football: EFL Carabao Cup 2018 Finals: Chelsea Vs Manchester City
PM
12.00 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
12.30 Football: Ladbrokes Scottish Premiership Round 27: Hamilton Academical Vs Rangers
2.30 Football: EFL Championships 2018 Matchday 34: West Bromwich Albion Vs Sheffield United
4.30 Fiba World Basketball
5.00 Magazine: National Icon
5.30 Asean Basketball League: Singapore Slingers Vs Westports Malaysia Dragons
7.30 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
8.00 Wrestling: WWE Experience (PG)
9.00 Football: Coppa Italia Preview
9.30 Football: EFL Carabao Cup 2018 Finals: Chelsea Vs Manchester City
11.30 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
AM
12.00 Magazine: National Icon
12.30 Football: Coppa Italia Preview
1.00 Football: EFL League One 2018 Matchday 34: Luton Town Vs Coventry City
3.00 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
3.30 Fiba World Basketball
3.40 Football: EFL Championship 2018 Matchday 34: Nottingham Forest Vs Derby County (Live)

Singtel TV

CARTOON NETWORK (CHANNEL 226)

AM
6.00 Oggy & The Cockroaches
7.00 The Tom And Jerry Show
8.00 Teen Titans Go!
9.00 Grizzly And The Lemmings
9.30 The Tom And Jerry Show
10.00 We Bare Bears
10.30 Supernooobs
11.00 The Powerpuff Girls
PM
12.00 Teen Titans Go!
1.00 We Bare Bears
2.00 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
2.30 Craig Of The Creek
3.00 Rat-A-Tat
3.30 The Amazing World Of Gumball
4.00 We Bare Bears
4.30 The Powerpuff Girls
5.00 Teen Titans Go!
5.30 Craig Of The Creek
6.00 Ben 10 Challenge
6.30 Oggy & The Cockroaches
7.00 The Tom And Jerry Show
7.30 Grizzly And The Lemmings
8.00 We Bare Bears
9.00 The Powerpuff Girls
10.00 Regular Show
10.30 Steven Universe
11.00 Clarence
11.30 Adventure Time

AXN (HD) (CHANNEL 304)

AM
6.00 Hawaii Five-0 7
6.50 Seal Team
7.40 American Ninja Warrior 7
9.25 Hawaii Five-0 7
10.15 Seal Team
11.05 Asia's Got Talent 3
PM
12.35 Rude(ish) Tube
1.05 Criminal Minds: Suspect Behavior
1.55 American Ninja Warrior 7
2.50 Hawaii Five-0 7
3.45 Seal Team
4.35 MacGyver 3
5.30 Seal Team 2
6.25 Instinct
7.15 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders 2
8.10 Caught On Camera With Nick Cannon 2
9.05 Hawaii Five-0 9
10.55 Maximum Risk

WARNER TV (HD) (CHANNEL 306)

AM
6.00 Blindspot 3
6.50 Major Crimes 5
7.40 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow 3
8.25 Person Of Interest 4
9.15 The Flash 4
10.00 Blindspot 3
10.50 Almost Genius
11.40 Godzilla

PM
1.55 Friends 10
2.20 Blindspot 3
3.10 Almost Genius
4.00 The Flash 4
4.50 Person Of Interest 4
5.45 Friends 10
6.15 Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice
9.00 Whiskey Cavalier
9.50 Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows Part 1

COMEDY CENTRAL ASIA (HD) (CHANNEL 324)

AM
6.00 At Midnight With Chris Hardwick 2
6.25 The Daily Show 24
6.55 Just For Laughs Gags 14
7.20 Mr Bean
7.50 Most Ridiculous 2
8.15 Amazingness/8.40 Mr Bean
9.10 Caraoke Showdown
9.35 Just For Laughs Gags 14
10.00 Hot In Cleveland 3
10.40 Mr Bean
11.10 Saturday Night Live 43
PM
12.00 The Daily Show 24
12.25 Russell Peters And Friends
1.10 The Comedy Jam
2.00 Saturday Night Live 43
2.50 Mr Bean
3.20 Just For Laughs Gags 14
3.45 Lip Sync Battle 4
4.35 Hood Adjacent With James Davis
5.25 The Jim Jefferies Show
5.50 The Daily Show 24
6.20 Your Face Or Mine 3
6.45 Amazingness
7.10 Billy On The Street 4
7.35 Most Ridiculous Asia With Harith Iskander
8.00 Stand-up, Asia! 3
9.00 Dr Ken
9.30 Just Another Immigrant: Romesh Ranganathan
10.05 The Family Law 3
10.30 Inside Amy Schumer 2
10.55 Above Average Presents
11.00 The Jim Jefferies Show
11.25 Above Average Presents
11.30 The Daily Show 24

JIA LE (HD) (CHANNEL 502)

AM
6.00 Taste Of Love
7.00 The Destiny Of White Snake
8.00 King Of Blaze
9.00 Eagle And Youngster
10.00 100% Wife
PM
12.10 The Destiny Of White Snake
1.00 In The Name Of Love
2.00 100% Wife
4.10 King Of Blaze
5.00 The Destiny Of White Snake
6.00 In The Name Of Love
7.00 100% Wife
9.10 The Destiny Of White Snake
10.00 King Of Blaze
11.00 Eagles And Youngster

TheStarsSay

Aries (March 21 - April 19)
You are meeting new people and your social energy is drawing them closer to you.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)
Your subconscious mind is active, so take note of anything that seems out of the ordinary.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)
Now is the time for you and your people to work together on a common project.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)
Colleagues are more important than usual, so make sure you are listening to them.

Leo (July 23 - Aug 22)
You need to make a change and have the right kind of energy to do that.

Virgo (Aug 23 - Sept 22)
Force yourself to do something new and big – or what is right.

Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)
Explore intellectual topics and seek out those who know more than you do.

Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)
It is not the best time to take a risk – luck is not on your side.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)
You should do whatever you can to get out of the house or your comfort zone.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)
Push your plans forward – at least one person who is watching likes what he sees.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)
You need to deal with someone new, but try not to worry too much or make a big deal out of it.

Pisces (Feb 19 - March 20)
Watch out for dissent at work – people are more likely than usual to try and get their way no matter what.

• Provided by Astrology.com (www.astrology.com)

Radio

KISS92

AM
6.00 Maddy, Jason & Arnold In The Morning
10.00 Weekdays With Carol Smith
PM
1.00 Weekdays With Charmaine Yee
4.00 On The Drive Home With Shan Wee
8.00 Josh's Goodnight Kiss

ONE FM 91.3

AM
6.00 Glenn & The Flying Dutchman
10.00 The Middy Brew With Charmaine Phua
PM
1.00 Afternoon Tune Up With Cheryl Miles
4.00 The Weekday Getaway With Divian Nair
8.00 Love Songs With Simon Lim
MONEY FM 89.3
AM
6.00 The Breakfast Huddle With Elliott Danker & Finance Presenter Ryan Huang
10.00 Middy With Howie Lim
PM
2.00 Prime Time With Claressa Monteiro
4.00 The Curve With Michelle Martin & Bernard Lim

UFM100.3

AM
6.00 UFM100.3 Mornings With Wenhong, Limei & Xiaozhu
10.00 Lively Life With Kevin
PM
1.00 Tea With Yuling
4.00 Sing-a-long With Xinying & Weilong
8.00 Feel The Night With Chengyao

96.3 HAO FM

AM
6.00 Morning Drive Time With Jing Yun, De Ming And Jie Qi
10.00 Lunch Break With Anna
PM
1.00 Automation
4.00 Evening Drive Time With Li Yi And Guo Xian
8.00 Night Time With Wei Wen

Tides

SUN RISE/SET TIME: 7.06am/7.13pm
MOON RISE/SET TIME: 4.07am/4.26pm

TIDES TODAY: Singapore: 3.43am (1.6m), 9.05am (2.3m), 3.37pm (0.8m), 10.30pm (2.4m). Desaru: 3.01am (1.8m), 7.41am (2.1m), 2.39pm (1.1m), 9.58pm (2.4m). Port Dickson: 5.10am (2m), 11.48am (1m), 5.22pm (2m), 11.43pm (0.5m). Mersing: 2.55am (1.6m), 7.28am (2m), 1.43pm (1.2m), 8.54pm (2.7m).

TIDES TOMORROW: Singapore: 4.11am (1.4m), 9.50am (2.5m), 4.16pm (0.7m), 10.54pm (2.5m). Desaru: 3.35am (1.6m), 8.58am (2.2m), 3.24pm (1m), 10.22pm (2.4m). Port Dickson: 5.38am (2.2m), 12.10pm (0.8m), 5.55pm (2.3m), Mersing: 3.26am (1.5m), 8.34am (2.1m), 2.43pm (1.2m), 9.31pm (2.7m).

For updates and more details, call Meteorological Service Singapore, NEA, on 6542-7788 or go to www.nea.gov.sg

Glenn could be closing in on an Oscar win



PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LOS ANGELES • Glenn Close (left) could be closing in on her first-ever Oscar win at the ceremony this morning (Singapore time), to add to her Best Actress trophy at the Independent Spirit Awards.

The accolade came last Saturday, with the 71-year-old, who has been nominated for an Oscar seven times in all, triumphant for her role in *The Wife*, a portrayal which is also up for a Best Actress Oscar.

While trade publication *Variety*'s chief film critic Peter Debruge noted that *The Wife*'s role "is not her strongest... it is an opportunity for her to really own a small film, to carry it on her shoulders, and to remind the industry that here is one of our real treasures as an actress".

The Spirit Awards are the annual honours given to Hollywood's low-budget movies made for under US\$20 million (S\$27 million).

Close, who turned up with her dog at Saturday's ceremony, wowed with her portrayal of a submissive spouse who finally finds her voice in *The Wife*.

Other Oscar contenders also received a booster shot from Saturday's results. Racial injustice movie *If Beale Street Could Talk* took Best Supporting Actress for Regina King. Her performance as a mother seeking justice for her son-in-law is seen as a strong contender in the equivalent Oscar category.

Mexican family drama *Roma*, seen as a strong contender for Best Picture at the Oscars, won the Spirit award for Best International Film.

On Saturday, Richard E. Grant was named Best Supporting Actor for his role in literary drama *Can You Ever Forgive Me?*, boosting his profile for the Oscars where he is also nominated.

But there was mixed news for Melissa McCarthy.

The Golden Raspberry Awards, or Razzies – given out annually on the eve of the Oscars to "celebrate" the worst in cinema – gave the thumbs down to the actress for her roles in both *The Happytime Murders* and *Life Of The Party*.

But the Razzies also granted McCarthy a Redeemer Award for her Oscar-nominated and widely praised performance as a curmudgeonly forger in *Can You Ever Forgive Me?*.

Critic Joe Morgenstern said she played the part "with unerring wit and ferocious verve".

But other pundits do not expect McCarthy to close the gap to sentimental favourite Close and pip the veteran to the finish line.

On social media



BIG LOVE: Dwayne Johnson had a rocky time in high school when it came to dating. Given his physical size and preference for sporting a moustache then, he was mistaken as an undercover policeman by the girls. Johnson, whom *People* magazine decreed as 2016's Sexiest Man Alive, went online to share his memories after a video was posted by entertainment portal Page Six about his high-school days.

"Nice trip down memory lane," Johnson, 46, wrote. "And yes, very true story when I moved from Hawaii to Nashville, I was already (1.93m, 102kg) at 15 years old – and the students in my new high school thought I was an undercover cop. All the lovely ladies stayed far away from me."

But Johnson, who has two daughters with girlfriend Lauren Hashian, is not one to stay away from loved ones. He has another daughter, Simone García Johnson, 17, with a former flame. On Valentine's Day, he flew from Los Angeles to Miami "so I could spend an awesome afternoon and lovely dinner with my #1 Valentine @simonejohnson", he wrote, alongside a photo of himself on a private jet (above). "Little sleep but so well worth our invaluable and fun father/daughter time."

He contrasted that with a more depressing, humiliating experience in his younger days. "Laughin' at the time back in high school when I got into a Valentine's Day argument with my girlfriend and she so clearly told me where I could shove my roses."

PHOTO: DWAYNE JOHNSON / INSTAGRAM

Girl group Blackpink flex their muscles in North America

SEOUL • BTS are not the only K-pop act enjoying a rosy time in the United States. Girl group Blackpink have now joined the boyband – which sold out their American tour last year – in achieving a similar reception.

Their upcoming tour of six cities, with one stop in Canada, has sold out all 60,000 tickets for the April and May shows, with additional outings being mooted.

The choice of Hamilton in Canada upset their fans in bigger city Toronto, an hour's drive away.

Demand is likely to rise even further when Blackpink perform at the

prestigious Coachella festival in California on April 12 and 19, the first K-pop idol group to perform at the event.

While Blackpink, for now, are not as commercially successful as BTS, the quartet – who staged a sold-out concert in Singapore earlier this month – have at least beaten the boyband to one record.

Their 2018 hit single *Ddu-Du Ddu-Du* has become the most-viewed video from a K-pop group on YouTube, with more than 680 million views. BTS are right behind, with their 2018 smash *DNA* bagging more than 650 million views.



Blackpink members (from left) Lisa, Rose, Jennie and Jisoo at their concert this month. PHOTO: YG ENTERTAINMENT

Rocketman producers ramp up promotional efforts

NEW YORK • British band Queen will give the Oscars a rocking start this morning (Singapore time), and the makers of *Rocketman* will hope that Rami Malek – who portrays Queen frontman Freddie Mercury in *Bohemian Rhapsody* – can win Best Actor.

The producers of the Elton John biopic hope to cash in on any musical-movie goodwill in the run-up to their own movie's rollout on May 31.

Starring Taron Egerton, 29, as John, *Rocketman* has already launched a second trailer to fire up anticipation.

It shows Egerton tentatively performing John's 1970 hit *Your Song*, and, at some point, another musician tells his character: "You got to kill the person you were born to be in order to become the person you want to be."



Taron Egerton stars in *Rocketman*, about Elton John's breakthrough years. PHOTO: ROCKETMAN/INSTAGRAM

The trailer then flashes glimpses of how John, now 71, transforms himself into a flashy showman, with handlers advising him: "Just don't kill yourself with drugs."

According to *Billboard* magazine, Egerton said he was not intimidated having to do intimate scenes with a man.

"I'm not someone who is remotely perturbed by male intimacy. I'm quite proud of what we've done in it."

David Furnish, 56, who married John in 2014, told the Press Association that producing the movie has

"been an interesting challenge".

"But I'm also responsible for making a film about my husband. And our sons are going to inherit that legacy, so the legacy we leave with that film – cinema is such a powerful thing – we want to make sure we do our best to get it right."

"I'm excited but I have a few sleepless nights because I feel a profound sense of responsibility to get it right."

Directed by Dexter Fletcher, *Rocketman* also stars Jamie Bell, Bryce Dallas Howard and Richard Madden.

Rocker Peter Frampton racing against time

NEW YORK • Rocker Peter Frampton is working against the clock after contracting a rare degenerative muscular disease that could inhibit his ability to play the guitar.

The artist, whose 1976 album *Frampton Comes Alive* still reigns as one of the all-time best-selling live records, told CBS News he has been feverishly making music since his diagnosis with the incurable condition.

"Between October and two days ago, we've done like 33 new tracks," the Grammy winner said.

"I just want to record as much as I can, you know, now, for obvious reasons."

Frampton, 68, learnt of his condition 3½ years ago after a fall on stage and, last autumn, began to feel his muscles lose strength more rapidly.

"What will happen, unfortunately, is that it affects the finger flexors," he said. "So for a guitar player, it's not very good."

For now, Frampton said he can still play, "but in a year's time, maybe not so good".

"I'm a perfectionist and I do not want to go out there and feel like, 'Oh, I can't, this isn't good'. That would be a nightmare for me."

His upcoming tour will be his last.

The musician told *Rolling Stone* magazine that one dollar from every ticket sale will go to a fund he is starting at medical facility Johns Hopkins, where he is receiving treatment.

"Maybe a huge door is closing in my life, but then there are lots of other doors that open."

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

In short

Sequel to *A Quiet Place* in the works

John Krasinski is returning to direct an as-yet-untitled sequel to 2018 blockbuster *A Quiet Place*. Stars Emily Blunt, Noah Jupe and Millicent Simmonds are in talks to reprise their characters in the horror film.